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COMICK SKETCHES.

THE MAN WITH THE DASH.

I ONE morning mounted the Dover mail-coach, for I was under the necessity, as there was no room inside, of putting up with the conveniences of a seat on the top of the coach. Having secured one which was tolerably comfortable considering its situation—I very politely took out my snuff-box, which I consider to be the most approved mode of introducing one's-self to a stranger, and offered it to a fellow-passenger who sat immediately before me.

"No, I thank you, sir: I had rather be excused; I don't take snuff, thank heaven; I have other means of *killing* time quite as efficacious."

The personage who made this somewhat uncourteous reply to my advance of sociability, was a man of the middle stature; his features sufficiently regular, when at rest, to prevent you from remarking anything remarkable in his physiognomy; but, when animated, there was an indescribable something of drollery about them, which, together with his *outré* dress, gave him a most fantastick aspect. He was clad in a complete suit of oiled cloth; his hat, his gloves, his gaiters were all of the same material; and even his heavy, double-soled shoes, were coated over with an oily covering, the odour of which was perceptible at a distance.

The sky, soon after, became overclouded, and a "pitiless pelting" shower inundated us in our exposed situation, without mercy. As we had no umbrellas, we were in a little time soaked through to the skin, the eccentrick philanthropist only excepted, who, ensconced in his oiled suit, laughed both at the combined efforts of the wind and rain, and the drenched condition of his fellow-travellers.

"Our sufferings must be amusing to you, sir," said a young officer, who was evidently chagrined at the bantering air of the other.

"Quite the contrary, sir, I assure you," was the reply, "quite the contrary: I pity you all, and that with all my heart. Amused! why, sir, there's not an ourang-outang in the world, brute enough to be amused by such a spectacle. Look at our two neighbours there, the gentleman in black, and the gentleman with the snuff-box. Don't they look like two drowned rats! I might certainly tax you all with imprudence, but I don't wish to do so; so far from it, I merely would advise you to profit by my example. Take a lesson from me, and before you start on your next journey, get made, by your tailor, a suit like this I have on, and then you may place yourself under the falls of Niagara without catching a cold."

"What then, pray sir, is the nature of the water-proof dress you wear?" inquired I, for I was resolved to hazard the question.

"Why, sir, it is simply this," replied the stranger. "My whole dress has been steeped in the *Huile de Goudron*, a preparation which I myself have lately invented. Soak your cloth in it, have it made into a dress, and I will warrant it water-proof to the end of your life. There's nothing in the world like the *Huile de Goudron*, gentlemen, I assure you."

The weather pleasantly cleared up, and every one seemed inclined, as I was myself, to get some farther explanation as to the wonderful oil. But no! its inventor and panegyrist took a cigar out of a case, and, lighting it by a phosphorick match, puffed it in silence, remarking merely when he threw away the last remains of the ashes, "Such is man! Death leaves nothing of us but a few ashes." An observation which seemed somewhat to annoy the gentleman in black.

At this instant we stopped to change horses, and every one embraced the opportunity to alight. I immediately "took the coachman by the button," with a view to ascertain from him, if possible, the name of the *strange* stranger, who by this time had excited my curiosity to a painful degree.

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared the coachman, "well, he is a droll creature, isn't he now!"

"Very droll, very droll, but do pray tell me what is his name; who is he?" I answered, impatient of a moment's farther delay to the satisfaction of my inquisitiveness.

"Who is he! Well, really, I know nothing about him."

"What! don't you know his name!"

"Oh, you only want to know his name. You see he travels by our line very often. I have driven him along this road, ay, at least a score of times, but the only name I ever heard him called by, was *the man with the* ——"

"Coachman, what is the meaning of this delay!" cried a very important-looking personage in the livery of government. "You must not stay another second: behind time now: here, deliver this packet according to its address, immediately on reaching Dover."

"Yes, sir, yes sir!" answered the coachman, respectfully touching his hat."

By this time all the passengers had returned, and I was deprived of the chance of renewing my interrogatory, I again mounted the coach, and still cherishing the hope that I should obtain some information as to my *incognu*. When I saw him enter the next inn at which we stopped, I followed him.

The whole of the travellers I found in the publick room, with the exception of the man of mystery, who, I heard (to keep up his character of "an original,") had ordered for himself a glass of sugared water in the kitchen. Encountering a waiter in the doorway, I inquired of him the reason why the gentleman in the oil-cloth dress preferred to enjoy himself alone, and in the kitchen.

"Why, sir, don't you know that his refreshment will cost him a penny less there!"

"How is it, if that be the case, you all pay him so much attention!"

"Much attention! who wouldn't!"

"What! a man who goes into the kitchen because it costs him a penny less!"

"Certainly, sir, a man of his consequence."

"A man of his consequence!"

"Yes, sir. Oh, then, you don't know who he is!"

"No, no," said I, anxiously, "that, my good fellow, is the very thing I wish you to tell me."

"Well, then, I can tell you, sir; he is best known as *the man with the* ——"

"John, John! where are you! Be quick, bring in that brandy;" roared the stentorian hostess, and again broke off the last part of the cabalistick sentence, at the same time ringing the bell violently.

"Directly, ma'am; coming directly. Well, sir, I'm in a hurry, but I'll tell you. You see, sir, everybody knows him, although he pretends to be unknown to anybody. Every one seems to like him, and respect him, and some to fear him. Even the great government folks try to make friends with him. If any of our counts or marquises, or dukes, meet him anywhere, they always treat him like some great man of distinction. But stop, let me see, you only wanted to know his name. Well, then, sir, he is best known, as I said, to us, as *the man with the* ——"

"Ding! ding!! ding!!!" resounded the bell again, more imperatively than before.

"There it is again—second time! Well, his name is—excuse me, sir, I must run;" and suiting the action to the word, he thrust the towel under his arm, and scampered off to answer the summons of the bell; leaving me in a fit humour to consign the bell and my mysterious tormentor both to perdition.

"Heavens! I'll go down to the kitchen myself," I exclaimed, "surely there I shall learn something."

I entered, and there he sat.

"Oh, oh!" he exclaimed, "then you belong to the class of economicals, do you! I am glad to see it, sir, it is the best plan. We are in the right, my dear sir. 'penny saved penny earn't,' a 'service of china answers the purpose as well as one of plate.' These are my maxims, sir. Boy, what have I to pay!"

"Nineteen shillings and two pence, your honour."

"What! nineteen shillings and two pence for a glass of sugared water! Pshaw, you want to play a joke off on me, boy."

"Excuse me, your honour: you forget that when you were here on the first of May last, while the May games were going on here, you borrowed nineteen shillings to distribute among the village lasses."

"Well, but I gave you a sovereign since then, you young rascal."

"Yes, sir, you gave me a sovereign; but then, your honour, you said to me just so: 'Here, my man, take this to drink my health with;' and then I said to you, touching my cap so, 'heaven bless your honour,' if you remember."

"You are right—you are right, boy: I had forgotten all about it."

"But I shall never forget your honour's goodness."

"Well, well: there! that will do! you can go. Leave us."

The boy with a good memory was about to obey, when the hostess entered almost breathless, and revoked the injunction. She wished to know if I was a physician, as the daughter of a poor widow in the neighbourhood was likely to die for the want of medical attendance; the doctor of the place not being willing to attend, unless for immediate payment. The stranger waited to hear no more of all that which the hostess might probably have had to say. He snatched up his hat and cane, and, in a way far more familiar than ceremonious, thrust his arm through mine, at the same time exclaiming, "Come, *old gentleman!* you will go with me—will you not!" The demon of curiosity was all-powerful within me, and prevailed over every other feeling. I took both his manner and his "*old gentleman*" as pleasantries, and went with him.

As we passed him on the pavement—"Don't forget, gentlemen, we shall be off directly; can't wait, you know," shouted the coachman.

"We shall only be away a few—a very few minutes," replied my companion.

"Yes, sir; but you know if I am not in by the precise time, I lose my situation, perhaps; managers of the post-office very severe, sir, you know."

"Pooh! pooh! don't be troubled on that score; as for the officers under government—leave all that to me."

"Well, sir, if you say so, you know I can't refuse."

We then proceeded, and soon reached the cottage which had been pointed out to us. We entered, and witnessed a spectacle which was truly piteous. In the middle of an apartment nearly without furniture, but which, from the remains of tasteful tapestry still left on one side of the room, appeared in other times to have been the abode of elegance, on a miserable mattress lay a delicate young female of eighteen, apparently. Her mother, the widow, was kneeling beside her, weeping, and was evidently breathing a prayer like that of David for Absalom—"Would I could suffer—could die for thee." Powerless wish of a parent's love!

The casement, where the glass was nearly all gone, was stuffed with old rags: there was not even a fire on the desolate hearth. A few articles of china-ware, and of tattered wearing apparel, decorated one corner of the room, and appeared to be the substance of the personal property belonging to its occupants. No—I mis-state: an old picture—a well-executed portrait in oil colours, hung against the wall. Faded as it was, you could not mistake, in judging it to represent one of the family—one of happier days, of far different circumstances. Such it was. Even that sacred relick, we learned, had been offered for sale, but pronounced too old to be bought; and so there the ancestor remained, an unconscious witness, as it were, of the sufferings of his humbled descendants.

My companion inquired of the mother what had been the cause of their present condition. She told him the sad but simple story. Her husband had died suddenly; their circumstances were found to be embarrassed, and the relentless creditors had taken all, without forbearance, as without pity. Her daughter, soon after, was taken sick; she would not permit the doctor of the pauper-house to be sent for; she would rather have died; and the physician of the place would not visit her, unless on terms that he should have his fee regularly at every visit.

Having told them not to despair, but still to have a reliance on Providence, the unknown fairly dragged me with him out of the cottage, to a splendid mansion nearly opposite, the knocker of which he used so lustily, that he seemed to shake the house to its foundations.

An argus eyed porter opened the door.

"I must see your master immediately."

The physician himself, alarmed by the noise, came at this point of time into the entry.

My mysterious companion grasped him by the collar—"Come along with me, doctor; we are in haste; very much so. Come, Dr. Guerdon, and you shall have your *guerdon* at my hands; I will recompense you; but you must come at once."

At the sound of that word, "recompense," the son of Æsculapius followed, on as quietly and unresistingly as a lamb to the house of the widow. He very assiduously examined the state of the sick daughter's pulse, etc., and expressed his opinion, that she would be better, after using a little medicine and nourishing diet, in the course of a few weeks. My companion was in ecstasy at this news; asked for pen and ink, and a small piece of paper; which being supplied, he drew a draft on a London banker, and placed it in the hands of the old woman, who, on reading it, fell on her knees—she had seen the name.

"Oh, sir! forgive me that I did not recognize you! The friend of my poor husband! The patron of all that is great or good! The champion of the wronged and oppressed! The ——"

"I know what you would close with—the inventor of the *Huile de Goudron;* that is what you would add;" interrupted the man in oiled cloth, with a loud burst of laughter.

I would have given half I possessed for a glance at the name subscribed to that draft; but could not get one. The sick girl raised herself up, though evidently with pain, and added her own thanks to those of her mother. Her eyes shone with an expression of ecstatick delight, and a flush of excitement heightened the natural beauties of her fine features.

We journeyed on thirty miles farther; during which lapse of time and space nothing particular happened: though, by the by, I should remark, that my novel friend was never out of action, whensoever they changed horses or stopped to deliver the mail-bags.

Some hours before our arrival at Dover, we took up, on the route, another way-side passenger, who, I found out, was a colonel of hussars. No sooner had he mounted, than he shook hands, very cordially, with the inventor of the *Huile de Goudron;* and expressed his felicity at having had the good luck to meet with so old an acquaintance.

"This is fortunate, for *me* at any rate," I exclaimed, inwardly; "I *shall* learn something now!"

I availed myself of a favourable opportunity to question our newcomer; not doubting that he would put an end to my misery. That opportunity soon occurred, and, believe me, I did not let it escape!

"You must feel fatigued, if you have walked far, sir," said I, (to break ice:) "for, although the weather is fine, the roads are not kept in as good order as they ought to be."

"You are right, sir," replied the colonel; "but I have merely walked a little way; in addition to which I am a good pedestrian, sir; and do not know what it is to feel inconvenience from that kind of exercise."

Perceiving, as I thought, the preface to a long dissertation on exercise, and hygeian in general, which I might find to some to endure, and impossible to put an end to, I drew toward him, and, in my very politest manner, asked him, if he would be so obliging as to inform me, what was the *name* of the gentleman to the left, on the seat opposite.

"Do you mean *that* man in black!"

"No, sir, the one next to him."

"Oh! ah! you mean my friend, *the gentleman with the* ——"

He said no more; a violent jolt, as a useless notice, came first; and, then, over went the coach, scattering its contents about like so many sheets of paper, some here and some there, distributed by the wind. Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt, and it was but a short time before we all got rid both of our fears and the vexation of a delay of two hours. At about four o'clock, in the afternoon, we reached Dover. I repaired to the best hotel in the place, and succeeded in engaging the only bed which was unengaged. I then went into the publick room, commenced reading the newspapers, and had just began the perusal of some "horrible crime," or "horrible accident," I forget which, accompanied by circumstances the most atrocious, when in marched "mine host," with an interruption which I was not prepared to encounter. It was to announce, that, owing to the carelessness of the servants, *my* apartment had been engaged *since*, to another traveller.

"Well, what of that! here's the money for the apartment," said I, chagrined; but, at the same time, crossing one leg over the other, with the air of one who says, I can afford to pay.

"I do not wish you to pay, sir; it was with no such motive I came in to inform you of the unpleasant fact."

"But you do not mean to let him *have* my room!"

"I *must*."

"Why!"

"Because, my dear sir, I *dare not* refuse him."

"What! *dare* not refuse him!"

"No, sir, I assure you, I *dare* not"

"Why, who *is* this important personage!"

"He was one of your fellow-travellers, sir"

"Which one!"

"Why, sir, *you* know him! he is *the man with—the man with the*—*you* know him well enough!"

"Not I: '*the man with the*'—'*the* what!'"

"Why, is it *possible*, that you don't know *him?*"

"Very possible. I know nothing of him. You have made me fidgety—vexed—'*the man with the*'—what, I ask, *do* tell me *what?*"

"Why, sir, I can scarcely believe you, when you say you don't know *him.*"

"Hallo! hallo! Landlord! landlord! Waiter! waiter! Another bottle of your best Chateau Margau, quick!" cried a young fop, who was sitting at a table in the midst of a group of officers. It is scarcely necessary for me to inform the reader, that I was left by the host with my profitless question unanswered, while he ran to the accommodation of his more productive customers. Growing more and more anxious every moment, I came to the resolution to attain, either peaceably or otherwise, the possession of a secret, which, by this time, I began to fancy I had a personal right to. To put my desperate design in execution, I ascended the stairs of the hotel, and, in a few seconds, found myself opposite a door bearing the same number as that of my room; which number, for a great certainty, I had registered in my pocket-book. The door being half open, I entered without the ceremony of knocking, and found the usurper of my room sitting by the fire-place, busied in filling with gold coin a purse, made of the same material as his dress; that is to say, it was oil-cloth.

"Ha! How d'ye do! Is it you!" he exclaimed, as soon as I entered; "I am very glad to see you; for, if I am not mistaken, you were kind enough to lend me a crown this morning. There it is, sir, with many thanks for the loan of it."

My anger at the loss of my apartment subsided at once into good-humour. I thought of the old proverb, that short reckonings made long friends; pocketed the money, which he had actually borrowed in the morning, and took a seat.

"You are a remarkable man, sir," said I; "it appears impossible to resist your will in anything. I cannot account for it, in fact, unless by supposing that you understand better than others the secret motives which actuate mankind. Whatever you will, I have noticed, so it is, and yet, at the same time, I would not speak flatteringly, but I observe you seem to study the interests of others, rather than your own."

"You must know, sir, I am fond of maxims. One of mine is—'Pay your debts and you are a rich man.' As to the method of my conduct, it is very simple. Are you not aware, my dear sir, that those who gratify the passions of others, their wishes, and desires, find little difficulty as to the gratification of their own; that, in fact, they can always obtain what they want themselves? Well, sir, but man has a thousand passions; they vary in each and every one of us; but there is one which is an universal passion; one which is common to us all. Gold is the object, the ambition, of all. It is the object, sir, to which all other passions and feelings gravitate. Do I want to make the acquaintance of, and get free access to a vain man? I praise him exorbitantly. Is he a poet? I extol his poetical genius, and go into ecstasies over the beauty of his verses. But I ever commence by the administration of gold. Gold, sir, is my universal passport. I sow it, and never fail to reap a golden harvest. I have never found it to fail. Gold, sir, is the remedy of all evils. You will, I know, excuse me, sir; I must now wish you farewell. I have many affairs to arrange this evening; to-morrow, I start for France."

And so saying, my fellow-traveller very politely conducted me to the door of the apartment of which he had virtually dispossessed me. However, before I had passed the threshold I paused, resolved, at all hazards, to ascertain the concluding words of the enigmatick sentence, which I had heard on our route, "*the man with the* ——."

"Pardon me, sir," said I, "for asking a favour, which, perhaps, you will consider as rather a rude one; but, since I have had the pleasure of enjoying, for several hours, your company, and have been the witness of many strange events which have occurred on our journey, I have dared to hope that you would not refuse me the name of one with whom I have passed so pleasant, though brief, a season. Your influence over every one——"

"Stop, sir," said "*the man with the* ——."

He closed the door in a very solemn manner, and placing one of his hands on each side my ear, as though to prevent any one from hearing the secret except myself, in a voice low, yet deep, spoke thus: "Sir, I am *the man with the* OIL-CLOTH PURSE."

ITALIAN HISTORIETTES.

LADY OF MIRANDOLA.

In the year 1511, the Pope Julius the second, pretending that the dutchy of Ferrara belonged to the pontificate, attempted to wrest it from its lawful sovereign. He raised an army in the Bolognese; and in order to pass into the dutchy, he came first to a little village called St. Felix, between Concordia and Mirandola. The duke on his side, and the French who were with him, encamped at a spot called l'Hospitalet, between two arms of the Po, about twelve miles from Ferrara, and there they threw over a bridge of boats, well guarded from whence they made frequent sallies.

It happened one evening, that a lady and a sun-burnt cavalier sat together in a lofty apartment overlooking a fair, stone terrace, that belonged to the castle of Mirandola. They had met that day, after a long parting, and the lady having drawn her couch to the open window, that she might enjoy the evening breeze; and the gentleman, having satisfied his keen traveller's appetite, began each of them to grow rather sentimental, and to revert to the long-past scenes of childhood, as we are wont to revert to them when immersed in the fevered dreams of middle life. With quivering lips and moistened eyes, they talked first of their childish days—how they had chased together the first butterflies, and hunted for fairy gifts in the earliest spring violets;—how the lady, agile as a wood-nymph, had loved to climb steep rock and hanging precipice, and to set up a mimick cry of terrour, on purpose to incite her young cousin to follow her;—and how the gentleman, loving the little deceiver too much to be very indignant at the deceit, would infallibly claim his own reward for his prowess, when he returned from the rescue. Then they came to the stormier days of youth—and there was a long pause, for of all sweet memories the memory of early love was the sweetest.

"Ippolita," at last said the count, "I little thought, when planting that young moss-rose, which flourishes so luxuriantly in its rich china vase, that I was cherishing the plant which should furnish forth your bridal wreath!" There was a slight shade of reproach in the cavalier's tone, but the lady made no observation; so he continued: "Why did you bring it here, Ippolita!—it has no business to bloom in the castle of Mirandola. Why have you preserved it through all these long years?"

The lady paused a moment, and then replied: "I brought it hither because it was the only one of my youthful treasures that I cared for; and I watch over its preservation for a true womanly reason: because it requires so much care. Do you know," she continued with a look of blushing consciousness, which tried to say, do not think I keep the gift for the sake of the giver—"do you know it is almost impossible to keep moss-roses alive in this country: I do not think there is any other save mine in Lombardy." For a while after this speech, Ippolita's eloquence failed her. At last she said, "Do you remember that happy day, when you came back from your first battle, and found the little neglected, uncared for, almost unacknowledged child, whom you so often petted and soothed, grown almost to womanhood, and ashamed—the ingrate!—even to welcome you!"

"And do you remember," said Count Alessandro, "that evening—that last evening, in the old pine wood! Let me look on this bracelet again. Do you remember how I raved, and stormed, and insisted on seeing the interiour of the medallion, thinking foolishly it was the likeness of Count Louis! And you, Ippolita, looking bitterly scornful, bade me at last look on it, if I would, and never come into your presence again! you wear the bracelets still, I see."

"Nay, cousin, I wear it but as a penance."

Alessandro affected not to hear this remark, and continued:

"Ah! Ippolita, there was too much of woman's wilfulness in that."

"Nay, my cousin; and what will you call that wilfulness which would not rely upon the plighted word—which persisted, in defiance of the penalty, to demand ocular demonstration!"

"Well, Ippolita, there was much of errour on both sides, and I at least have suffered years of anguish, in consequence of it. You owe me some reparation. Come, Ippolita, let us forget the past, and give me one of those home-flowers in token of forgiveness."

"Nay, not that one, with scarcely one streak of red peeping through its mossy leafing—that were fit gift only for the acquaintance of a day."

The lady did not remove her hand from the bud she had herself chosen; she remembered not only the planting of the rose-tree, but also she remembered a conversation held at the time, wherein Alessandro had explained to her some parts of a certain eastern language—the language of flowers; so, although her hand was on the bud, she did not pluck it, but said with a smile, "nay, Alessandro, if you have suffered, so have I. You must do something else, ere you aspire to reward; you must rescue my castle from the siege, or myself from the besiegers. Some notable service must be performed ere I can allow you to become my cavalier."

"Well, then," replied the count, stepping out on the terrace; "pray heaven this trampling of steeds and noise, as of distant thunder, may not betoken peril to your fair castle or to your fairer self."

The lady raised her hand to shield her eyes from the beams of the evening sun. Presently they distinguished white plumes and shining arms gleaming through the clouds of dust; a few more minutes, and one detached himself from the rest of the party, and riding briskly forward, craved an audience of the lady of Mirandola. Ippolita put her arm within that of her cousin, and returned to the saloon; she threw her rich veil of Cyprus lawn over her shining curls, and drawing up her slight figure to its full height, stood in calm dignity awaiting the entrance of the envoy. She waited not long.

With many words of mock humility, and gestures of mock respect, the messenger informed her that he came from the pope, who, proceeding to the conquest of Ferrara, required the shelter of her castle for his troops, and commanded her, as an obedient daughter, to surrender it into his good keeping instantly and for ever.

The countess did not immediately answer this impudent demand; she drew herself up in a silent rage, while the rich blood mantled over cheek and brow, and her dark eyes flashed, till even the mailed warriour cowered and trembled beneath the glance.

"Now, on my truth, cousin," she said at last calmly to Alessandro, "we shall be at a loss for words sufficiently courteous wherewith to express our grateful acquiescence in this most humble request. Go to your master," she continued, turning to the messenger, and resuming her wonted dignity, "tell him that I am lady and mistress of this fair domain, and that I will perish ere a stick or a stone upon it shall be wrested from me, even by the venerable hands of his holiness himself."

"Truly," said the count, "it seems that this good father Julius is sent here expressly for my accommodation, to give me an opportunity of rendering the service you required. Trust me, my cousin, my words were no vain boasting; I will defend you and your castle even to the laying down of life. Do you believe me, lady?"

The eyes that had so lately flashed indignant fire, were now full of tears, as Ippolita answered: "The truth that has been tried by years, must not be doubted now: I do believe you, and accept your willing service in the same spirit with which it is offered. Let us concert how we may best proceed."

The count instantly sat down, and penned despatches to the duke of Ferrara, Alfonso the first and to the French generals, at l'Hospitalet, requesting troops and arms. The preservation of Mirandola interested Alfonso too much for him to refuse this request; he picked out a hundred brave warriours, and with them went as volunteers two French gentlemen, the Sieurs de Montcheuil and de Chantemerle. At their departure from l'Hospitalet, the good knight, "without fear and without reproach," besought them to signalize themselves, and to combat valiantly for the lady's service: he escorted them himself to the gates of the town. It was Bayard.

In the meantime, Pope Julius swore by St. Peter and St. Paul, that since the haughty countess would not surrender willingly, he would take her town and castle by force, and instantly ordered his nephew, the Duke d'Urbino, to prepare himself to besiege Mirandola on the morrow.

The morrow came, and ere the evening drew on, the besieged, though not more terrified at the pope's artillery than they had been at his threats, were yet sorely grieved, for the gallant Count Alessandro was wounded.

Alessandro was able once again to mount his own charger, and overlook the defences, by the time of Duke d'Urbino's arrival. His presence infused new spirit into the hearts of the men, for he was as much beloved for his courtesy as respected for his military talents. On the other hand, the Duke d'Urbino having reinforced the pope, their numbers united were four times as great as those of the besieged, so that it is quite uncertain which party would eventually have conquered, had not a new incident arisen, which effectually put a stop to the proceedings on both sides.

One morning, when the fair countess, sadly wearied of the noise and confusion of a beleaguered town, came to join her brave cousin in the saloon, and to ask how they went on, she was surprised to behold terrace, and garden, and street, covered with nature's fairest and most fragile vesture.

"We have been idle *par force*," said Alessandro, "this last night, my fair cousin, and I know not how long we must now remain so. All our works are stopped; but I for one cannot mourn over our respite. I have been absent too long from you, Ippolita. You look pale and careworn, and—holy saints! my cousin, there has been blood upon your brow."

"Nothing, nothing," answered the lady; "a mere scratch. Yesterday, when I stepped forth on the terrace, a bullet slightly grazed my forehead, and Chiara, I see, has bound it but carelessly."

"But it might have been fatal! and where was I, to have left you alone to front such danger! D'Urbino shall answer for this."

But the lady replied, with her wonted generosity of character: "Nay, Alessandro, do not be unjust. It was no fault of d'Urbino if my woman's curiosity mastered my fear. Let the event be what it will, you must not harm d'Urbino. Remember, you were friends and fellow-pages at the king of France's court, and we were, all three, companions in childhood together. I will have another bandage fixed, and do you, my noble and worthy cousin, see that the men are properly employed or amused, otherwise they will be tampering with the enemy."

Six days and six nights fell the snow, without intermission, and merrily passed those six days and six nights in the besieged city. If they could not harm the enemy, neither could the enemy harm them. They had an abundance of provisions, and of excellent wine; and deeming it sad pity that any portion of it should run the chance of falling into the hands of the pope and his followers, the rich men of the place threw open their cellars, and let it flow forth abundantly. Then there was such dancing! such carousing! such singing! to keep themselves warm. At last the besieged were forced to confine themselves to the upper apartments of their houses; the snow was in many places six feet in depth; to it succeeded a hard frost; there was ice in the ditches round Mirandola, of two feet thickness; even the bullets could not impress or break it.

The pope's artillery effected two wide breaches; so that the lady and her counsellor were obliged to think of capitulation. They knew that the Sieur de Chaumont was at Reggio, with the rest of the French army, fortifying it, in the full expectation that Julius, after reducing Mirandola, would carry thither his arms. Julius, too, had an accession of strength: some Spanish and some Venetian troops joined him; so the lady Mirandola, yielding to the elements, rather than to the enemy, proposed to surrender, on condition, that the garrison and the inhabitants should pass forth uninjured. Julius, anxious for revenge, would not at first consent to this; but d'Urbino mediated, and arranged the affair to the satisfaction of all parties. He remembered kindly his fellow-page and his laughing little companion, Ippolita; so he pleaded powerfully with his uncle, and won him over to his wish. The holy father would not condescend to enter Mirandola by the gates, but caused a bridge to be thrown over the opening in the walls, and entered triumphantly through the breach.

On that same day, the lady and her champion sat together, as they thought, for the last time in the room wherein they had at first met. The countess, whose spirit had all along been unwilling to admit the possibility of defeat, gave way to a natural feminine weakness at last, and the count sought to rally her by alternate remonstrance and playful reproach. "No," she said, weeping bitterly, "my tears are not coward tears; leave me here to my fate. I fear not man; with man I could struggle still and combat; I bow to the viewless destiny, which has been about me with destroying influence from childhood. My father's name stands high in the world's esteem, yet have I ever lived the orphan's weary life. You, Alessandro, have never known defeat, until now you come to my assistance; and I, have I not been pining here for years in my solitary state, and now, at the very moment when wealth and power would be valuable, my possessions are wrested from me! Leave me to my fate!"

The count lingered; he drew her toward the china vase, and again demanded the boon of one rosebud, as a pledge, a token. Ippolita said, "No, not now, Alessandro: it is not that you deserve it not, but I refused you the token-flower when I was rich and powerful, the mistress of these fair lands; and will not give it you now—now that I am driven forth a penniless exile: that were a poor reward for your generous service. Alessandro, I will never be your bride, until I can bring you this fair castle as my dowry."

Ippolita kept her word, for hers was a proud spirit. She permitted her cousin to escort her to a quiet convent, which she had in childhood inhabited for a short time, and there she remained in perfect seclusion, while he went on his career of glory.

At last, a change came over the fortunes of their love. Again the castle of Mirandola was a scene of festivity; it had changed masters, but what then? The vassals of low degree—ay! and even the guests of lofty degree, could raise the wine-cup on high, and quaff it as merrily to the health of Trivulzio, as to that of Julius. And Ippolita stood in her own halls again, and in the sunny hour she redeemed the promise she had plighted, when the storm had gloomed the horizon of her life.

The evening of the day on which Trivulzio reconquered his daughter's possessions, was held as a high festival. The old halls were lighted up, the banquet was spread, light steps danced over the marble floors, and the musick of merry laughter echoed joyfully through the dim corridors.

But apart from the gay revellers, stood two who mingled neither in the dance nor song, but who yet were the happiest inmates of Mirandola that night. At last, when twilight had dispersed her thousand sweet influences in the still air, when the pale form of the crescent moon lighted up the very topmost branches of the old pine wood, which skirted the sleeping landscape, they stepped forth on to the terrace—that terrace whereon, a year before, they had renewed together their sweet recollections of the by-passed; that terrace whence they had first descried the cloud which had dimmed, but had not blighted, the renewed happiness of their life. Again Alessandro's hand was on the moss-rose tree; and this time Ippolita permitted him to choose that bud from among its store of fragrant treasures, which pleased his fancy the most, and, when he had made his selection, she gathered the flower and gave it to him.

Let us not turn over another leaf of their lives. They are dreaming again, as they dreamed in earliest youth, of love and constancy and happiness. Let the storm come, and let the tempest rave; they are blessed already beyond their fellow-mortals, inasmuch as they sleep again, though it be but in fancied security.

ORIGINAL GOSSIP AND TABLE-TALK.

FIRES IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

A PAPER, entitled *London Fires in* 1835, in a recent British periodical, gives some interesting statisticks of fires, and their causes, which, in a city so subject as New-York to this dreadful visitation, must necessarily be worthy of notice. Although our space in this department of our paper is rather limited, still we find room for this article on account of its importance, and the curiosity of its research.

"The following particulars are extracted from a paper compiled by Mr. Baddeley, and published in the *Mechanicks' Magazine*. There have been six hundred and forty-three alarms of fire in London and its vicinity during the year 1835. There were, in the month of January, thirty-eight fires; in February, forty; March, thirty-six; April, forty-five; May, thirty-five; June, thirty-seven; July, thirty-seven; August, forty-eight; September, thirty-five; October, thirty-three; November, thirty-six; December, fifty-one; with one hundred and six alarms from fire in chimneys, and sixty-six false alarms. *Seven* fires were attended with loss of life, and *fourteen* lives were lost. The following list exhibits a classification of the trades occupying the premises at which the foregoing fires have taken place; care having been taken to discriminate between the fires that originated in that part of the building occupied in trade or manufacture, and those that have happened in and damaged the dwelling parts only, by placing the latter under the respective heads of private dwellings or lodging-houses, for the purpose of showing the comparative liability of each particular calling to accident from fire:

Bakers	18	Brought forward	163
Basket-makers	2	Oil and Colourmen	7
Booksellers, Binders and Stationers	2	Oil and Pickle-merchants	1
Brewers	1	Painters and Glaziers	1
Brokers	10	Paper-stainers	1
Builders	1	Paper-hangers	1
Butchers	1	Pastry-cooks	2
Cabinet-makers	9	Pawnbrokers	1
Cane-diers	2	Picture-dealers	1
Carpenters, etc., not Cabinet-makers	13	Pitch-makers	1
Chandlers	4	Printers, Letter-press	4
Chemists, manufacturing	3	Printers, Copper-plate	2
Coach-makers	2	Private dwellings	145
Coach-painters	1	Prison	1
Coffee-roasters	2	Publick Dancing-rooms	1
Coffee-shops and Chop-houses	7	Rag-merchants	2
Colour-makers	2	Rope-makers	1
Confectioners	1	Sale-shops, no hazardous goods	47
Cork-burners	2	Saw-mill	1
Curriers	2	Ships	3
Distillers	1	Ships, steam	2
Dyers	2	Ship-builders	2
Eating-houses	3	Soap and Camile-makers	2
Farms	3	Stables	7
Feather-merchants	2	Starch-makers	1
Fellmongers	1	Tallow-chandlers	4
Gaming-houses	2	Theatres	1
Gas-works	1	Tinmen, Braziers and Smiths	5
Glass-blowers, private	1	Under repair	5
Grocers	5	Unoccupied	8
Hat-makers	2	Varnish-makers	1
Horse-hair-merchants	1	Victuallers	32
India-rubber-manufacturers	1	Vitriol-makers	1
Lamp-black-makers	1	Warehouses	3
Lodgings	48	Weavers	7
Lucifer-match-makers	1	Wine and Spirit-merchants	2
Maltsters	2	Wool-staplers	1
Marine-stores, dealers in	1	Workhouses	1
Carried forward	163	Total	471

Vigilance has been exercised, to ascertain, as far as possible, the causes which have led to these fires; but much difficulty necessarily attends the prosecution of this inquiry (and, in nearly a hundred cases, it has been found absolutely impossible to determine their origin. The perusal of the following summary, however, if properly considered, will furnish a highly useful lesson to all persons.

Fires occasioned by accidents, ascertained to be, for the most part, unavoidable	14
Bed-curtains set fire to	52
Candles, various accidents with	26
Carelessness, palpable instances of	19
Children playing with fire	5
Drunkenness	3
Fireworks	3
Fires kindled on hearths and other improper places	9
Flues and chimneys, defective, foul or ignited	61
Fumigation and bug-hunting	7
Furnaces overheated, etc.	2
Gas, sundry accidents with	20
Heating of hay and straw	3
limpblack	1
lime	4
rags	1
Linen, incautiously hung before fires, etc.	22
Shavings, loose, ignited	9
Stoves and stove-pipes, defective setting or overheating of, etc.	11
Trade, application of fire-heat to various purposes of, etc.	20
Tobacco-smoking	4
Unknown	91
Wilful	6
Window-curtains set fire to	22
Total	471

COURTSHIP.

Addison, Colbett, George Alexander Steevens, and Bulwer, respectively, have furnished the following maxims, by an observance of which much may be effected toward acquiring and maintaining a happy lot in marriage.

"Admiration is a very short-lived passion, that immediately decays upon growing familiar with its object, unless it be still fed with fresh discoveries, and kept alive by a new perpetual succession of miracles rising up to its view."—ADDISON.

"There are so many circumstances, perfectly nameless, to communicate to the new-married man the fact, that it is not a rival angel of whom he has got the possession; there are so many things of this sort—so many and such powerful dampers of the passions, and so many incentives to cool reflection, that it requires something, and a good deal too, to keep the husband in countenance in this his altered and enlightened state."—COBBETT.

"Courtship is a fine bowling-green turf, all galloping round and sweet-hearting, a sunshine holiday in summer-time: but when once through matrimony's turnpike, the weather becomes wintry, and some husbands are seized with a cold, acuish fit, to which the faculty give the name of indifference."—G. A. STEEVENS.

"Possession, like all earthly blessings, carries within it its own principle of corruption. The deadliest foe to love is not change, nor misfortune, nor wrath, nor anything that flows from passion, or emanates from fortune; the deadliest foe to it is custom. With custom die away the delusions and the mysteries which encircle it. With all passion, the soul demands something unexpressed, some vague recess to explore or to marvel upon. Custom leaves nothing to romance, and often but little to respect. The whole character is bared before us like a plain, and the heart's eye grows wearied with the sameness of the survey. And to weariness succeeds distaste, and to distaste one of the myriad shapes of the Proteus—aversion; so that the passion we would make the rarest of treasures, flitters down to a very instance of the commonest of proverbs; and 'out of the familiarity cometh contempt.'"—BULWER.

FAREWELL TO WINTER.

The season of balls and parties has now glided by; no more flirtations amid the mazes of the quadrille, no more gentle pressures of the hand, and significant glances telling what the tongue fears to confess amid the frank and joyous boundings of the *contre-danse*. Farewell to convivial supper and family merry-meetings, the members of which will be scattered over the broad surface of this continent in search of pleasure and business, until next winter. In the words of an English poet of the magazines,

"Good night to the season! the dances,
The fillings of hot little rooms,
The glancings of rapturous glances,
The fancyings of fancy costumes,
The pleasures which fashion makes duties,
The graspings of fiddles and flutes,
The luxury of looking at beauties,
The tedium of talking to mutes,
The female diplomatists, planners
Of matches for Laura and Jane,
The ice of her ladyship's manners,
The ice of his lordship's champagne."

SPRING.

Oh! Primavera, gioventu dell'anno—
Oh! Gioventu, primavera della vita!

So sung an Italian poet, that spring is the youth of the year, and youth the spring of life! To it we dedicate the following verse:

"The Spring is here—the delicate-footed May,
With its slight fingers full of leaves and flowers,
And with it comes a thirst to be away,
Wasting in wood-paths its voluptuous hours—
A feeling that is like a sense of wings,
Restless to soar above these perishing things."

LOVE, AND THE LADIES.

We quote the following passages to express and record our dissent therefrom. We are the sworn servants of the ladies, and amateurs of *la gaie science*, and if all that can be urged against love is that it is a fitting solace for boys only, why—we hope that boys we may always be, and never have to say with Rousseau, *ici finit le roman*.

"'Who loves, raves;' 'tis youth's phrenzy,' for 'to love the young and tender wit is turned to folly.' The time of trifling is always early, and in the boy-day of life. '*Parva leves capunt animos*,' says the great master of the Arts of Love; and, in truth, the puerility of this passion bespeaks its season. "The winged boy," is for boys to sport with. Art thou a knight-errant in these matters? then art thou also young; thou hast all the enthusiasm of a novice in life; thou art of an age when we form a chivalry-lip and a bright eye of more account than all other earthly things

'L'amour dans un jeune homme est toujours romanesque.'

But our 'poetry of life' decreases as our knowledge and experience advance, and men put on the spectacles of common sense after thirty. All that is useful for the purposes of life, is unfavourable to that foolish exhilaration which forms the lover and the poet. Let no man, in the meantime, bear himself to expect more from woman than a human creature is capable of. If he look for an *angel* in an earthly bride, he must bespeak his goddess: 'tis certain there are none such ready-made."

TWENTY MINUTES.

Has any reader of the Mirror heard the following story from the lips of the late Charles Matthews? If there be none who have had that enjoyment, no conception can be formed of the irresistible fun, drollery and point, which the mimick threw into the recital.

"'When I was about leaving Liverpool for America,' said Matthews, to a professional friend, just before he left this country, 'I asked the Yankee captain, as we were lying in the stream, what detained us, that we were not off?' He answered, 'the mail, sir.' I inquired when it was expected? 'In about twenty minutes,' was the reply. In an hour or two the mail came on board; and when we had moved but a little distance, then there was *another* stop. 'What is *that* for?' said I. 'We are waiting for a pilot,' quoth the master. 'How long before he will be on board?' was my next question. 'In about twenty minutes,' was the answer again; and so it was all the way over. If there was a *calm*, (during which time I decided to last more than twenty minutes: that space of time was likewise the estimated duration of a calm; and one passenger, nine and white with active sea sickness, was told to keep good heart, for it *might* not last more than twenty minutes.' When I arrived in New-York, after numerous provoking delays, and had become fairly established at my lodgings, there comes up a waiter, in hot haste, with, 'Mr. Matthews? Mr. Matthews! you can't stay here no longer, sir.' 'Why you villain?' 'Cause you can't, sir.' 'What is the matter?—the reason?—you can't?' 'Cause, sir, the sheriff has bought his *whole* estate, and the red flag is out o' the window, and they're gwyin' to sell out, sir.' 'Well, when must I go?' 'Why, sir, I s'pect you'd better be *jettin' away in about twenty minutes*.' 'And thus,' continued Matthews, in his factful, querulous manner, 'has it been ever since I set my foot in America. You'd hardly believe it, yet I have just returned from calling to see an old friend, who was very kind to me on my former visit.' 'Where is Mr. B——?' said I, to the servant. 'He is dead, sir.' 'Dead! dead! How long since did he decease?' 'I should think *about twenty minutes*, sir.' Was the answer. 'In short,' irresistibly concluded the comedian mimick, 'there is nothing that cannot be, and is not done, in the United States, in twenty minutes!'"

LINES FROM THE PERSIAN.

There is a quaintness and prettiness in the following quatrains by Hafiz, which we think worthy of preservation. The conceit is trite enough, but it is forcibly expressed.

"Arise, that rides so fair,
As beauty and sweet youth,
Should grow the worse for wear,
And look uncouth!

Body and soul must part
Twas heaven hath spoken;
Looks knitting heart to heart
Must all be broken?"

FEMALE INFLUENCE.

It was a pertinent and forcible saying of the Emperour Napoleon, that "a handsome woman pleases the eye, but a good woman pleases the heart; the one is a jewel, the other a treasure." A pretty illustration of this maxim may be found in the following periods:

"Like the olive-tree, said to fertilize the surrounding soil, there are some few ministering angels in female guise among us all sent about our paths, who sweetly strive to cheer and adorn life. Our amusements are insipid unless they contribute to them; our efforts of noblest ambition fruitless, unless they applaud—its rewards valueless, unless they share them! There are, too, some rude spirits in the world, whose ledger nature female influence admirably serves to refine and temper; and, perhaps, it is not an extreme extremism of the poet, that without that influence many a man had been 'a brute indeed.' The concurrence of both sexes is necessary to the perfection of our being, as to the existence of it.—Man may make a fine melody, but woman is also required to make up harmony."

SUNDAY EVENING READING.

THE DANGER OF SELF-DEPENDANCE.

I KNEW a young man of an inquisitive and fearless mind, and of fair promise with respect to talents and piety, who at the commencement of his theological studies, adopted the resolution, "that he would endeavour to get his mind into a state of entire indifference as to the truth of the Christian system, and that he would never receive a doctrine as true, unless it was so clearly proved and demonstrated, that no objection whatever could be brought against it." This dangerous resolution he carried into effect. It hardly need be said to those who are in any good measure acquainted with the nature of the human mind, that he became more and more doubtful as to moral and religious truth, till in the end he believed in nothing, but "in all unbelief." His faith and hope and happiness were wrecked. He forsook the throne of grace, restrained prayer, and neglected the duties of the Christian life. A horrible gloom gathered around his soul, and the shadow of eternal death settled upon all his future prospects. And it cost that dear youth unutterable darkness and distress, and years of repentance, before he was restored to faith, and communion with God, and the comforts of the Holy Spirit. He now views it as a miracle of mercy, that he was not left to perish in that more than midnight darkness in which he involved himself, not by a fair and impartial examination of the doctrines of religion, but by pride, rashness, and a renunciation of divine truth. He has learned that, whatever may be the boast of freethinkers, the love of God and his word is the only impartial state of mind.

SELFISHNESS.

Selfishness is the besetting sin of our fallen nature. It interferes with and adulterates the love of our neighbour; it excludes from our bosoms the love of God. But self love, so far from being an illegitimate principle, is an essential part of the constitution of every sentient existence, and in the second great commandment is assumed as such, and constituted, as has just been said, the standard of our love to others. The reasoning of the apostle Paul is beautifully correct, when he says, "he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet: and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love the neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." In its heart-searching spirituality, its precision and simplicity, its readiness for application, its force of intellectual appeal to the understanding and to the heart, its comprehensiveness, both as to the objects it embraces, and the dispositions and conduct it inculcates toward them, this precept is divinely worthy of the place it holds. Taking love to God and love to our neighbour together, well might our divine Master say of them, "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

ETERNITY.

When creation began, we know not. There were angels, and there was a place of angelick habitation, before the creation of man and of the world destined for his residence; and even among these pure spiritual essences, there had been a rebellion, and a fall. How long these spirits had existed, and how many other orders of being besides, it is vain for us to conjecture; for conjecture could lead to nothing surer than itself. But of one thing we are certain: that, how far back soever we suppose the commencement of creation carried, let it be, not only beyond the actual range (if a definite range it can be said to have) of the human imagination, but even beyond the greatest amount of ages that figures, in any way combined could be made to express; still there was an eternity preceding—an eternity, from which this numerable and unreckonable duration has made not the minutest deduction; for it is the property of eternity, that it can neither be lengthened by the addition, nor shortened by the subtraction, of the longest possible periods of time. Before the commencement of creation, therefore—before the fiat of Omnipotence which gave being to the first dependent existence, and dated the beginning of time—in infinite and incomprehensible solitude, yet, in the boundless self-sufficiency of his blessed nature, feeling no want and no dreariness—Jehovah had, from eternity, existed alone!

HARMONY OF THE UNIVERSE.

As he that hears a concert of musicians playing a lesson of six or eight several parts, all conspiring to make up one harmony, will immediately conclude that there is some other cause of that harmony besides those several particular efficients, that struck the several instruments; for every one of them would be but a cause of his own part which he played; but the unity of the whole harmony, into which all the several parts conspire, must needs proceed from the art and musical skill of some one mind, the exemplary and archetypal cause of that vocal harmony, which was but a passive print or stamp of it—so, though the atheist might possibly persuade himself, that every particular creature was the first author or efficient of that part which it played in the universe, by a certain innate power of its own; yet all the parts of the mundane system conspiring into one perfect harmony, there must of necessity be some one universal mind, the archetypal and exemplary cause thereof, containing the plot of the whole mundane musick, as one entire thing made up of so many several parts within himself.

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION.

Whatever philosophers themselves may think of it, there is not a more important end which science has it in its power to effect, than the elevating the soul to its Divine Maker, in the sentiments and emotions of "reverence and godly fear," and of grateful adoration and praise. How deeply is it to be deplored, that science and devotion should so frequently have been disunited, and that philosophy, by busying the mind about the works of Deity, should, in so many instances, have induced forgetfulness of their Author, and have tended, instead of kindling, to quench the flame of piety! One of ourselves, a poet of our own, has said—

"An undevout astronomer is mad."

BE YE MERCIFUL.

Christ chose these to preach mercy, who had received most mercy, as St. Peter and St. Paul, that they might be examples of what they taught.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

HOME AT LAST.

A SHIVERING child, one winter's night,
(The snow was deep, and cold the blast,)
Hugging her ragged mother tight,
"Mother!" exclaimed, "we're home at last!"
And as she spake, poor little one,
A ruinous hut she stood before,
Whence, ever since the morning sun,
They strayed—to beg from door to door.

Ye're home at last! Sad home is this—
All lorn without, all cold within;
The adder here might lurk and hiss,
Her poisonous web the spider spin—
But there's no fire to warm, nor light;
And crevices are yawning wide,
Through which the storm, this freezing night,
May lay you stiffened side by side!

And yet this wayward child had been
By many a gorgeous house—and past
Where mirth and musick cheer the scene,
Nor envies—for she's home at last!
Thus may the heart be trained below
To love the cot wherein was cast
Its fate of poverty or wo,
Like hers who cried—"We're home at last!" C. C. P.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTERS FROM AN AMERICAN ARTIST ABROAD.

DELIZIE FIORENTINE.

Theatres of Florence—the Del Sere as comedy—advantages to be derived by students of painting and sculpture—advice to criticks—conclusion.

On the opening of the last carnival, while the four principal theatres, namely, the *Alfieri, Goldoni, Cocomero,* and *Teatra Nuova,* displayed at the corners of the streets the titles of comedies of Goldoni and Scribe, and the inferiour ones of the *Giglio, Piazza-Vecchia,* and *Bourg Ogni Santi,* offered to another class of the population the never-tiring *plaisanterie* of Stenterello, peculiarly piquant in his native Firenze; distinguished above all the rest the courtly *Pergola* announced to the frequenters of the musical drama the "*L'Elisir d'Amore,*" and presented so much beauty in the person of their young *prima donna,* that if the most *valente cantatrice* of Italy had performed at another theatre, I should have continued my attendance at the *Pergola.* I had not hitherto witnessed on the Italian stage a comick opera, and I could not help thinking, that those boards, on which I had seen displayed, with so much effect, the chains, the dagger, and the black vestments of the tragick muse, would be profaned by the mirth and gay smiles of comedy. As the time approached, I felt an indescribable curiosity to see what sort of thing would be a comedy on these classick boards, and what figure would be made by the *prima donna,* when out of the buskins in which she had so magnificently trod the stage of tragedy.

First of all, the gayety of the overture raised in my mind an elastick vivacity, which as well prepared it for the brilliant scenes of the opera, as the antique and frowning portals of the magnificent catiedral of Chartres prepare you to be impressed by the gothick gloom which pervades the interiour. I will admit, that my adoration of the tragick muse never received so severe a shock as when the curtain rose, and displayed the stage, filled by the chorus, at the head of whom appeared the young *prima donna,* in the costume of a Tuscan peasant. During ten minutes or more that the chorus sang, her business was to sit and smile incessantly, while from time to time she looked into the volume which she held in her hand; I was lost in admiration at the profusion of rich smiles which were poured out on this occasion; lavished on a single individual, they would have been overwhelming, and became tolerable only by being divided among the multitude who filled the theatre. By what secret, thought I, can that magick volume unlock such sources of delight as ever flow from the soul of Del Sere! You would have thought that she had not smiled for a year before, and that the accumulated reservoir of mirth was now for the first time finding vent. The beautiful line which arched the corners of the mouth, had not time to fade from your sight, when another came like a wave over its traces, and another and another followed in rapid succession; and, as they chased each other across that fair and elastick surface, which seemed formed to receive the touches of expression, it was through a mass of smiles two or three deep, that the audience held communion with the soul of the performer.

Let me leave for a moment the *prima donna,* the court and the publick in the opening scene of "*L'Elisir d'Amore,*" to make an observation on the efforts of imitative art, as compared with the spontaneous performances of nature. Del Sere off the stage would have made two or three exquisite smiles on occasion of the circumstance which produced them, but acting here as an artist, she summoned up from the regions of thought and sentiment, of fiction and experience, a crowd of gay images, which touched the nerves of mirth, and through their medium moved the organs of the face. If the thoughts, which during these moments came to birth in the palace of this sparkling soul, could have been painted, were to become visible to the audience, they would have been seen streaming away to other regions and other times, touching scenes from infancy to the present moment, the images of whose well-remembered pleasure were always ready at hand, to serve when occasion like the present arose to make use of them. It was easy to imagine, that some of the scenes thus touched, by the rays emanating from the soul of Del Sere, these scattered fragments of existence, these memorandums gathered from a beauty's gay career, would have been scenes somewhat analogous to those of "*L'Elisir d'Amore,*" scenes in which hearts had been subdued at a glance, and lovers had fallen before those victorious eyes, (which she herself in the same comedy asserts to be the real "*L'Elisir d'Amore,*") and in which various circumstances had taken place, calculated to furnish smiles and airs, and frowns, suitable to be employed in the comedy in question.

Nor let it be supposed, that a performer has always to mimick nature, and send abroad his thoughts in search of images, capable of imprinting a smile or a frown on the surface; much is going on behind the scenes, unseen by the audience, but visible to the actors, and glances and smiles are often interchanged with the persons there stationed, or with some favoured individual among the spectators themselves, which an accomplished performer, and none more than Del Sere, knows how to press immediately, while fresh from the soul, into the service of the part which she sustains in the play. What I have said above, may suggest one remark with regard to the efforts of imitative art, as compared with nature. There is certainly in nature a spontaneity, a force, and a freshness, which art cannot pretend to attain; but there is on the other hand, in the studied efforts of art, a richness, a copiousness, and a condensation of the elements employed, rarely displayed by nature, and as these elements are widely scattered through the realms of material and immaterial existences, of organized and unorganized matter, an endless scope is afforded to genius, to study and to class them, and to bring them to bear, when wanted, on a work of imitative art. Hence one man may make a statue, and another man may make another statue, representing the same person, or emblematick of the same quality, or virtue, or anything else you please; and the difference of merit between these two statues may be as immense as the difference of excellence between two works of philosophy or imagination, composed by two minds of the most unequal capacity.

I am induced to make these observations, because I see many honest and sensible people in the United States take upon themselves to criticise objects of painting and sculpture, while their notions on the subject seem to be pretty much on a level with those of the pope, to whom Giotto sent as a specimen of his powers a circle, which he had struck out by a flourish of his pencil. More particularly of late have I heard criticisms and remarks proceeding from persons, who, I doubt not, may be extremely clever in their own profession or business, who may understand how to plead a cause, to plan a successful speculation, or even to edit a newspaper; from which one might infer, not only that they think it worth while to communicate to the world their inestimable opinions, but also that they consider themselves qualified to dictate to artists. I beg leave to inform these personages, that however distinguished they may be in their various walks or professions, they tread on a most uncertain ground, when they enter on a subject so remote from those on which they have been accustomed to employ themselves; and moreover, that the atmosphere they live in is confoundedly unfavourable to the acquirement of notions on art, and that those who have never been out of it are hardly ever able to escape from its misleading influences. I am aware that many of these persons look upon the arts of design as but little elevated above the mechanick arts; and as they think themselves quite competent to criticise a mahogany sideboard, a carpet, or the frames of their pictures, it seems natural enough that they should pass on to the pictures themselves. I can assure these worthy persons, that the arts of design, though called imitative arts, are employed to produce objects that are as much new creations as are any works of imagination, and that, moreover, the profession of a painter, or a sculptor, is as intellectual as that of writers on philosophy or history; for, to say nothing of the imagination employed on these productions, it is no easy matter to decide how far philosophy is not the mother of art. As long as painters and sculptors are employed in representing men, the philosophy of man is as much their study, as it is that of a philosophick historian. Those worthy persons who think that the design of a statue is a concern to be despatched right off, and that the position of the head and limbs are matters that may be as well decided by tossing up a dollar, as in any other way, might as well suppose that Gibbon produced his immortal history by sitting down and writing off, as fast as the words would flow from his pen, to the end of his sixth volume.

I find that I must leave the "*L'Elisir d'Amore*" at the opening of the first act. It was my wish to have said something on the advantages to be derived by students of painting and sculpture from the view of dramatick performances, and on some of the principles which characterize the productions of all the imitative arts as compared with those of nature; but the immediate departure from Florence of one of the editors of the New-York Mirror, whom I have here had the happiness to meet, and to whose indulgence I owe the appearance of these articles in its pages, compels me to bring this number to a speedy termination. I shall only mention one splendid instance of the effect produced by an effort of imitative art, as compared with the original of the imitation, of which I should have made use, had I been able to follow out the subject.

When I hear at the *Pergola,* Duprez in Othello, repeat six times in succession, the words, "*Morrò ma vendicato*"—"I will die but avenged!" which, as he sings them, occupy a space of ten minutes or more, each time more magnificently than the preceding one, and the last time more magnificently than all the rest together, without having my admiration fatigued or exhausted; it is evident that I am pleased by a circumstance of which the reality would produce very opposite effects; for who could sit and hear Othello, or if you please Duprez, repeat six times in succession, "*Morrò ma vendicato,*" without wishing him at the devil, for disturbing you with the communication of such horrible intentions.

TRANSLATED LITERARY CRITICISM.

REPLY TO

"PARIS AND THE PARISIANS IN 1835."

TO MRS. TROLLOPE, LONDON.

VOUCHSAFE, madam, to allow the humblest of your admirers to add a few to the many observations that have fallen from your pen. It is certainly presumptuous to follow you into those regions of fancy where you justly shine with so much lustre, and where you have been wont to cull flowers as you ran. Thanks be to you, nothing has been left for erudition or criticism to glean in the United States and in Belgium; every country that you have visited, you have treated as a vanquished territory. Your genius is egotistical, for all travellers, when they hear of the renown of your distant exploits, complain, like Alexander, that there is nothing left for them to achieve. You have condescended to visit Paris, and Paris is already yours; Paris is as much your property, madam, as the landscape that fringes the banks of a river is a part of the stream that reflects it in its bosom. The study of a nation, the just appreciation of the literature and of the internal and political existence of a great people, are certainly not to be expected from the efforts of a mere school-boy; to accomplish so arduous an undertaking, it has been ascertained that years of toil and drudgery were to be undergone by those endowed with intellects of an ordinary stamp; a few short months have been sufficient for yours. You possess the comprehensive glance of the eagle. Where reason pauses and wavers, your intuitive instinct grasps, and at once settles the question. Those secrets which commonplace intelligence is doomed to extort from stubborn labour, you discover them in your most playful mood. Civilization has no mysteries for you. A single promenade under the spreading trees of the Tuileries, a little chat beneath the influence of the vernal sun, a cup of tea sipped in a saloon are of more real value to your penetration, than midnight vigils and deep reflections would be to ours. You are the female Œdipus of our age, the Egeria of our forests, the Sibyl of modern times. Thrice happy the land that could entice you to its shores; happier still that which could induce you to adopt it for ever. You hold, as it were, the mirror up to nations. How then shall I, who acknowledge myself unworthy to kiss the feather of your pen, or to unlace the sandals that clasp a stocking whose hue I dare not name; how shall I presume, madam, to unfold to you those doubts and compunctious visitings which your writings have awak ened in my breast! Ah! indeed, if less glory were attached to your name, less renown to your works, had the measured cadence of your tread less solemnity of sound, criticism would scarce take the pains to point out the few trifling errours it fancies it has discovered in your sublime odysseys, in your ineffable poems. But your situation is so elevated, that criticism seeks not to enter the lists against you, but to enlist you on its side. Do not, then, harbour the thought that I would have the hardihood to couch a lance against your celebrity; no, madam, I come to borrow light, not to offer it.

After an absence of seven years, madam, you have revisited Paris; and Paris, at the news, was in an ecstasy of delight. We awaited you on tip-toe with impatience as lively as it was heartfelt, for we were dying to know what we were to think of the moral physiognomy of our metropolis. At length you came, and eight days after your auspicious return among us, you knew all about us.

You found Paris awfully changed; during your absence, a revolution had swept over our heads. You had left the spotless field of white floating o'er the Column; on your return, you found the three colours unfurled to every breeze. I sympathize with you in your sorrows, I honour your tears, I respect your predilections, and refrain from making them the topick of discussion. Alas! how could you have abandoned us to our fate! Those very events which you now deplore, your prudence and foresight might have averted. Had you published six years ago the immaculate work which is now the subject of my meditations, you might have rescued a whole dynasty! But, madam, let us dwell no longer upon these vain regrets; the past is irredeemable, but futurity is yours.

I am at a loss to account for an errour, for which your publisher, unquestionably, stands alone responsible. I have detected in your work, which has an indisputable claim to being a faithful portrait of Paris and the Parisians in 1835, certain stale reflections which must assuredly be ascribed to the time of your first sojourn in our land. However, those who, like yourself, have skimmed over so many countries, and visited so many different kinds of people, can easily be forgiven for a little confusion in their reminiscences. For instance, you expatiate upon our fashionable slang; the epithet *rococo* throws you into delightful hystericks—you annihilate with the thunderbolts of your wrath *la jeune France* and all its misdemeanours. All that you have said on this head, bears the impress of most exquisite taste. It is, nevertheless, to be regretted that certain unceremonious writers have been uncivil enough to forestall you some years ago in the coruscations of that wit which you scintillate to day. Yes, madam, the time was, five years since, when our minor journals used to crack their jokes and bandy their jests about *la jeune France,* and at this present writing, youthful France is somewhat declined into the vale of years; the epithet *rococo* is only applied to those who occasionally make use of it, such slang being altogether exploded. You have taken the trouble to reanimate our dead, merely to enjoy the pleasure of *burking* them again.

I follow you to the exhibition at the Louvre; I have respected your political creed—I now prostrate myself before your admiration for the fine arts. Heaven forfend that I should wish to stem the current of that sympathy by which you are hurried along. What I

especially admire, is the atticism with which you point out the unskilfulness of those painters who have covered, with their works of art, the paintings of their masters. "How painful must it be" (I quote from you, madam; let not your modesty take the alarm) "for an artist when, as I understand it frequently happens, he gazes incognito upon his most favourite productions, to listen to such remarks as fell upon my ear in the gallery filled with the collection of Saint Bruno, by Lesueur." But I pause, madam, and am mute with wonder at the ingenuity of your remark. Verily your phrases come trippingly off the tongue; your translator certainly must be the very phenix of quill-impellers. But, shall I confess it, certain expressions which you have let slip, have completely set at naught all the notions I had hitherto entertained respecting the native coyness of the English language. You relate, with that liveliness for which you are so famed, that in the museum, in all those places where the crowd is most dense, you saw and *smelt* a number of cititizens of both sexes who were unpardonably dirty. You then proceed to entertain us about *greasy overalls, soiled linen*, and *worn-out petticoats*. I had always been of opinion that British prudery could little tolerate this dashing boldness of language.

Are you not apprehensive of having been too severe with respect to our literature, its votaries and its principles? Indulgence is the best attribute of superiority. You have lost sight of it, madam; you have treated us as your equals. What "ignorant sin" have our authors committed to justify you in thus unmercifully smothering them in mire! Oh, Mrs., Mrs. Trollope, this looks like anger! Beware! if you lose your temper, people will say you are in the wrong; take heed, again; if you vituperate us, you will flatter our pride. Is it possible! with the exception of the two names of Châteaubriand and Lamartine, which you can scarcely refrain from enrolling in your black list of proscription, could you not discover some noble talent, some pure and honest reputation? Since the year 1830, our literati have not published a solitary work whose leaves are worthy of enwrapping your silver tresses. Doubtless, it is not the lot of every nation to be blest in the same century with an author like yourself, madam! Like meteors and comets, great geniuses appear only at intervals, few and far between. Notwithstanding, you will suffer me to believe that, had you persevered, you might have discovered some intellectual faculties capable of comprehending, though not of equalling your sublimity. I am, moreover, afraid that you have been imposed upon with respect to our literary morals; are you quite sure that your impartiality has not been taken by surprise? Your judgment, in other respects so infallible, may have been led astray by some unhappy exceptions. You are of opinion that "if you were overheard by the buzzing swarm of our petty geniuses who congregate, some in the saloons of the theatres, others in the offices of newspaper editors, others, again, in those places where fashionable tales are manufactured for the reading publick, you would be infallibly stung or stoned to death. You think you already hear their outcries;" such is the force of your imagination! "Shameless calumniator!" exclaims one; "unblushing slanderer!" cries another. Ah! madam, in what antechamber of valets and lackeys, in what petty department of the police, in what tavern or favourite resort of prize-fighters have you learned our manners and our language! Albeit, we practice most charily among ourselves that system of living, emphatically called *savoir-vivre*, still I think we have not lost all claims to that sterling French urbanity which our forefathers have bequeathed us. If you have abjured your sex for the love of glory, *we* have not ratified this abdication of your dearest privileges; beneath the laurel-wreath that overshadows your brow, we discern the pale roses of your cheek; a woman and a poet, we bend our knee to you; and even if the trumpet of fame had not been filled with your name, you would still have an unalienable right to our homage, a right held sacred at Sparta, and which we respect at Paris, although we *can* manage to dispense with black broth.

This incidental essay on politeness leads me to treat upon a more serious question. It is obvious to all your readers that our literature of the present day has not had the good fortune to suit your taste; I am not at all surprised at that; but there is in the sentence you have passed upon our writers in general, and M. Hugo in particular, so much acrimony and acerbity; your critical acumen is so blunt and rough, your literary phraseology is so sudden, crooked and angular, in a word, it is so little akin to anything like literature; your *modus operandi* struck me as being so strange, so out-of-the-way, so unbecoming a reputation of such a high order as yours, and a lady of your dignity, that I have been visited with certain qualms of suspicion in regard to your translator. Madam, do you know who your translator is? are you aware that there is no more terrible scourge, that we have no deadlier foe than our translator? He takes hold of our ideas, strips them and disguises them just as he pleases; he mutilates the members of our phrases, deprives them of all sense, so that beyond the boundary line of our native country it is impossible for us to recognize our own bantlings. Madam, take my word for it, your translator is a suspicious character; and I charge him with having mixed dregs with your wine, and having changed your attick salt into a mere kitchen condiment. How am I to know that your anonymous interpreter is not envious of M. Hugo; that in the discharge of his duty he has not taken too much upon himself; that under the sanction of your name he has not sought to wreak some personal spite, or screened himself with your apron in order to satisfy some lodged hate by firing his pop-gun? This looks serious, as M. Hugo himself will allow. You, a lady of wit and elegant manners; the acme of all that is poetical and polite, the adopted author of English aristocracy, you certainly only meant to tap us gently with a white and perfumed hand, which, twenty years ago, would have made its victims the envy of every beholder; but, would you believe it? your translator has cuffed us with clenched fists, and while, at London, you ingenuously thought that you had merely ruffled a few of the rose-leaves of M. Hugo's couch, M. Hugo is actually reclining upon a bed of thorns.

No, you are not guilty; you surely could not have written those pages, which, I verily believe, were sketched at the bar of some gin-shop; you, the apostle of good taste, could not have forsworn your master. You may possibly have said, that M. Hugo did not always come up to his own expectations; that his fame as a dramatist had not, as yet, disturbed the slumbers of your immortal Shakspeare, that his characters were unnatural, that his genius had no errand on this earth, that he stood aloof in our society like a monument of art, a splendid, but useless, ornament. Perhaps, you have said all this, madam; but, then, with what a winning charm, with what suavity and grace! In what mellifluent periods must you not have robed the severity of your criticism; how skilfully must you not have dropped the bitter pill in sweetest honey; with what touching piety must not your hand have poured balsam and perfumes over the wounds of self-love! Was it a soft ottoman, or a cushion of eider-down, or a bank of moss and flowers, that you prepared for the fall of the great one! It is woman alone that knows the art to wound alike and heal—to heal us while she wounds.

But, then, what has your interpreter been about! He has most shamefully abused his privileges; he has substituted the language of fishmongers for your elegance of diction, and converted the taps of your fan into downright cudgel-blows. At every page in your work the reader turns to, he is shocked by expressions which certainly were never suffered to pass current in genteel society. For example, when speaking of our French literature, you are made to say, that it is a *stigma upon the escutcheon of the French nation*; the epithets "extravagant," "infamous," "odious"—the substantives "nonsense," "folly," "madness"—occur very frequently while treating of M. Hugo, in the critique which is ascribed to you. You are made to say, that *France has cause to blush for M. Hugo*. All this, madam, is pretty much the kind of criticism we might expect from a bailiff, and out of respect to you as well as to myself, I shall investigate no farther this case of breach of trust, which I sincerely hope the laws of your land will repay with retributive justice.

There is one kind of hatred to which you are prone, and you *must* plead guilty to the soft impeachment—that is, your settled hate against all republicans; they delight not you, neither do the people; and yet, one would hardly think so, after reading the language attributed to you. Once more, I do not wish to call in question the validity of your prejudices; and, beside, it would not be difficult for you to obtain a verdict in your favour in the columns of this paper.* Assuredly, there must be some secret sympathy between you and this magazine, which you have condescended kindly to notice in your immortal work. But, are you not afraid that you have allowed yourself to be carried away by the force of your natural antipathy? Have you not lost sight of that good breeding and superlative taste, whose high-priestess you undoubtedly are? Have you preserved, in the presence of the sons of Brutus, that noble and serene deportment which became your rank? Have you not humbled the imperial purple before the plebeian toga? Have you not given the children of the people an opportunity to impart to you some lessons in manners and politeness? I cannot say; but my belief is, that all religious creeds are equally entitled to respect; and that, between persons who lay claim to some degree of education, the weapons of debate have nothing in common with the bludgeons of the police. In that very class of men whom you denounce, methinks, with too sweeping a condemnation, there might possibly be found more than one aristocratick tribune, who could civilly send you back to school to learn your manners. Perhaps, you *might* have drawn some distinction between the ragamuffins that wrangle for the tunick of Robespierre, and the conscientious spirits whose aspirations tend only to the sovereignty of the people. You have, unfortunately, confounded the republican plagiarists of 1793, with the men of heart and feeling, who devote themselves to the accomplishment of a too brilliant Utopia. Rest assured, there are, among these latter, some lofty minds whom the shafts of your malice can never reach. Among those very men whom you represent as ogres, unclean, pale, emaciated, with matted locks, there are some who are very mild and tolerably neat; there is no edict in France which prohibits the wearing of white gloves, or the unlimited consumption of almond paste. However, if the essence of aristocracy is rarely to be met with in your expressions, it is, nevertheless, to be found in all its purity in your pretensions. So, you are shocked at the general appearance of the garden of the Tuileries; you cannot conceive why the *populace* should be allowed free access to a publick garden. You compare the Tuileries to Noah's ark, where all animals, clean and unclean, swarmed together. I forbear to repeat here any trite remarks about equality; I am willing to believe, with you, that all men are not made out of the same kind of clay; but, still, one doubt gives me uneasiness: would you allow the sun to shine on all alike?

As to the "accused of April," do you not think, now, that your fears have had time to evaporate, and that cool reflection has succeeded to the indignation excited in you by the monster-trial—do you not think, madam, that you were rather ungenerous toward men who were suffering for their cause? You persecuted them with your irony—you overwhelmed them with your hatred—you were merciless toward them all. Have you taken for the motto of your coat-of-arms those words of a relentless victor, *Væ victis!* wo to the vanquished! They were, indeed, conquered, madam; they were disarmed—fettered; the supreme tribunal was about to decide upon their hopes, their fortunes, their lives. Did you not stifle the noblest impulse of generous hearts, and forget the gentlest attribute of a woman and a poet! Napoleon, who is no favourite of yours, stood uncovered before his wounded foes.

I beg leave to return to a more general question. I pass over in silence the sublime epopees inspired by the police of our streets, the carding of mattresses, and the tinning of saucepans. What surprises you most in our morals is the astonishing freedom with which we, even in the best society, speak of things, to which, in England, the lowest classes would never dare to allude. You think that Martine was not alone in his opinions, and that our maxim is: "*Quand on se fait entendre, on parle toujours bien.*" (What's the odds, as long as one's understood.) You charge us, in a word, with being deficient in that refinement of which your countrymen are so proud. Madam, you are always in the right. No nation on earth understands so well as yours the art of dressing out their conversation in holiday-clothes and superinducing a fig-leaf over their chastest ideas. I admit, that the vestal virgins of ancient Rome would be scarce fit to serve in the capacity of chambermaids to your ladies. Who, then, will undertake to reconcile the anomaly, when your genius, which was cradled in that virtuous isle, where the very coalheavers dare not call things by their right names—that your genius should so readily indulge in laxity of thought and vulgarity of language! Apropos of the difficulty of obtaining water in our dwellings, you rather oddly endeavour to pry into the mysteries of our ablutions. While on the subject of republican riots, you somewhat unfeelingly recount a carnival frolick in which M. Lobau enacted the part of Monsieur Purgon. I have already drawn your attention to a page in your work which reminds me strongly of a list of foul clothes. How can you account for that, madam? Have you unconsciously fallen a victim to the baneful influence of our loose morals! Could you not, like the fountain of Arethusa, glide through our society without sullying your pristine purity? Or must I, once more, call in question the integrity of your translator! I should like to know, whether your translator is to be the scapegoat for all your sins!

Madam, I pause at the end of your first volume; my Lilliputian steps can never keep pace with your gigantick strides. Only allow my admiration time to take breath. I had scarce done with your first volume, when volume number two whizzed, like a rocket, through our literary circles; number three is grumbling overhead, and Criticism, wearied out by so many exploits, exclaims with Boileau: "*Grand roi, cesse de vaincre, ou je cesse d'écrire;*" or, in other words, "Madam, put up your facile pen, for we no more will read." C. V. B.

* Alluding to the Paris paper in which this article originally appeared.

ORIGINAL LEGENDARY TALES.

CHARLEMAGNE'S DAUGHTER.

Have you ever been in Germany? If not, I would recommend you to lose no time in visiting a very peculiar and (to me at least) a very interesting country. Pass from Dover to Calais, from Calais to Paris, where you may advantageously devote a few weeks to the examination of that place which the ambition of Napoleon would have elevated into "the minature metropolis of the universe;" from Paris to Strasburgh, where you cannot help visiting the cathedral, the finest gothick building in Europe, the most symmetrical in its beautiful harmony of proportion, the most graceful and elegant, because the most pure and simple in its architecture; from Strasburgh to Baden, from Baden to Heidelberg, whose famous tun is still extant, but without a single drop of Rhenish in its capacious bulk, and from Heidelberg to Frankfort on the Maine.

This is a long route, and you may dread that the object of this paper is to give you an itinerary. You will find yourself mistaken; the object has been to place you in the scene of a story, which (if I do not mar it in the telling) possesses some interest.

Frankfort lies on the right bank of the river Maine. If you intend visiting it, I shall not forestall your pleasure by any attempt at description. I hate your guide-books, which tell you how this was built, and how that was burned—pointing out the beauties which you had much rather discover with your own eyes. It is enough for them to inform you that such things are; what they are, you can find out without being informed. For my own part, I hate visiting any place of which I have read high-flown descriptions. You have nothing to see when all is anticipated by these impertinent tell-tales. You leave the place with a hearty curse at the minute details of the guide-book, and repent having lost your time, temper and cash, in a pursuit which is so profitless and tame. Take my advice and follow my example; if you are about taking a tour, do not take any "travels" with you. Ascertain, generally, what is to be seen, but make it a point to see with your own eyes, without forming prior opinions from the descriptions of others.

You may rest at Frankfort for a few days. Perhaps you will examine the cathedral, with its beautiful and unfinished tower, or see the Romer, within whose walls the German emperours were elected and crowned. The senate of Frankfort now hold their sittings in the election chamber. Look at their copy of the far-famed golden bull. When you have seen these things, unless you happen to arrive in the bustle of Michaelmas fair, (second only to that of Leipsick,) you will have beheld all that Frankfort has to boast of, and can leave it with little regret, to accompany me up the Maine to the village of Selingenstadt, (The Abode of Bliss,) about a dozen miles from Frankfort.

This village is delightfully situated, close by the bank of the river. It has a large forest in its rear, an outskirt of the Spessart; a fine champaign before it on the opposite bank. High above the petty houses which compose this little place, stands the "Red Tower," an edifice well known to the lovers of romance.

The best house in the village is the auberge, over which, some years ago, a host presided, whose capacious size and rotund figure, involuntarily reminded one of the Great Tun of Heidelberg. The Herr Von Cothen was a genuine German; his meerchaum seldom left his lips, except when the wine-cup (an hereditary goblet of massy silver won at a drinking bout by one of his ancestors) was raised to them. The man seemed but to live for the purpose of smoking, sleeping and drinking—not that he ever was known to be what is called "disguised in liquor"—he protested that such a quantity of clay as himself required moisture, and he took good care to moisten it.

It was my fortune to know him for the space of three months, and I can safely say that, with one exception, I never knew him venture on any deviation from his trinity of practices, the aforenamed drinking, smoking and sleeping. The Herr Von Cothen had a great dislike to the labour of conversation. His "puff" went for a signal of assent. Was he angry, a quick succession of short puffs told of his wrath; was he pleased, the tabacine smoke gracefully curled round his head like a fog rising out of the Thames!

The exception to his taciturnity took place in this wise: We had spent a pleasant day in what was the Spessart forest, and were returning home when the Red Tower met our view. We were weary, and threw ourselves on the mossy bank, beneath the shade of a mighty tree, where, in a few moments, both of us fell asleep. I was awakened by the voice of my companion. I kept silence while the redoubted Herr Von Cothen broke into an unexpected burst of eloquence, and dilated loudly and long on the delights of the feudal days, when the lord had power of life and death, within his territorial limits, over his vassals. He spoke well for a German host, and the novelty of his speaking was yet more. True, there was not a very lucid order in his conversation, but this could easily be pardoned in one to whom language had almost fallen into disuse. Von Cothen lay on the ground at listless length, while telling a tale somewhat to the following effect:

Some centuries ago, there was an Emperour Nero, (no relative of him of Rome,) who came, after the manner of the times, to celebrate his Christmas holidays at Frankfort. He was devotedly fond of the chase, and held nearly an equal affection for his daughter, a maiden over whom some seventeen summers had lightly flown. She was, indeed, if there be truth in legendary report, a very delightful, beautiful, and innocent creature. But her charms were even less than the rare purity of her mind—the soft and gentle character of her feelings. Born in a cottage, she would have cheered the peasant's lot—brought up amid the magnificence of an imperial court, she won the envy of one sex, and the earnest admiration of the other. Such beauty of person and goodness of heart could not remain unknown; and (being an only child) many of the princes of the empire put in their claim for her hand. But the lady's heart was pre-engaged, and she paid little attention to the compliments of her many royal wooers.

Clorinda, thus was she called, had set her affections upon one far beneath herself in rank. Like

"The king's daughter of Hongarie,
Who loved a squire of low degree,"

the daughter of the Emperour Nero had given her heart's first love to a young man, one of her father's huntsmen.

It is impossible to say how the secret was discovered, but certain it is that the princess was placed in close confinement, and her lover would have been summarily and severely dealt with, but he had taken flight, and pursuit was useless, no one knowing in what direction he had fled. To do the young man justice, he had anticipated the discovery of a secret dear to him as his life, and taken steps accordingly. Deep in the hidden haunts of the Spessart he had found a cave—probably the former residence of some religious ascetick—and he had made the best provision in his power for that decisive step which, love whispered, the princess would not refuse to take, for his sake and her own. While she, in tears, sat in the solitude of her chamber, her Ludolf was busy in making preparations for her rescue.

Whenever princesses fall in love with their father's huntsmen, it is usual for royalty to be utterly appalled. Accordingly, the emperour was in a most magnificent passion, and gave strict orders that the princess should be confined to her own chamber. The next morning, however, he made the discovery—just a few hours too late—that the bird had flown—like Love, when

"He opened the window and flew away."

The poor, old emperour pined after her so bitterly, that not an unmarried lady of the court but would have been glad to have consoled him, had he offered her his hand. But, much to the disappointment of their philantropick intentions, his majesty did not see how he could atone for the loss of a daughter by taking a wife.

The princess and her Ludolf (who had assisted her out of her confinement) lived as happily "beneath the greenwood tree," as if there had never been such things as courts and kings, emperours and principalities. They loved one another earnestly and well, and (but this was long ago) had no wish to return to the crowds of society. Even if they had, there would have been no safety in attempting it, for how could either hope for forgiveness? Meanwhile, the loss of his daughter had fallen heavily on the emperour. She was the sole living thing to which his hopes had long been linked, and all the father and the man were shaken by the uncertainty of her fate and her absence from those places over which her smiles threw a radiance, beautiful as the last tints of dying day upon the snow-crowned hills. The old man said little, but his grief was deep. Pride would not permit him to yield to open lamentations, but in secret he shed many a tear. His household gods were shivered by his hearth, and, like Rachel mourning for her children, he would not be comforted.

He quitted Frankfort, and many years elapsed before he again saw the place with which were linked so many and such sad recollections. He had laid aside his usual sports—the huntsman's spear had rarely been held by him since that day on which he lost a daughter; and it was with some surprise that the court heard him announce that he would hold a hunting-match on the morrow.

Five years had lessened his endurance of fatigue, and it was with some pleasure that at the close of the day, when the ardour of the chase had separated him from his suite, he found himself beside a rustick hut, at the door of which two lovely children were playing. To dismount from his weary steed, to enter the cottage, and to request refreshment, was but the work of a moment, and instant preparations were made for his repast.

The emperour had fallen upon the residence of his long-lost and still-loved daughter. Ludolf was a successful deer-stealer, and the fruits of the earth furnished them with other food. Besides, Ludolf had learned that the emperour had quitted Frankfort soon after the flight of the princess, and felt little hesitation in visiting the market there, to exchange deer and other skins for necessaries, and sometimes for a few of the luxuries to which his Clorinda had been accustomed, and which she had left for him. Frugal in their habits and their desires, they had lived happily without a wish for change.

The graceful girl had budded into the glorious maturity of womanhood; and, farther changed by her rustick attire, the emperour did not know his child. She knew him at a single glance, and there came quick-throbbing memories of the past, wild hopes of the future.

The sole repast which their situation permitted on the instant was some venison, poached by Ludolf in the emperour's own forest. What limit is there to woman's wit, when aided by woman's affection? Clorinda prepared the repast with her own hands, serving up a dish which she remembered to have been a favourite with her father—of which, too, he had never eaten except when it was prepared by his daughter's hands. Scarcely had he tasted the food ere the tears began to fall, fast and bitterly, for her whose memory neither time nor anger could destroy, and he eagerly inquired from whom his young hostess had learned to prepare that dish!

The princess and her husband fell at the old man's feet. The emperour was still a father; his kind heart remembered only that his daughter was before him; all was forgotten and forgiven; he named the place Selingenstadt, or the Abode of Bliss; (in duple commemoration of his daughter and his dinner;) he carried the happy family with him to his palace; ate his favourite meal as often as he wished to his dying day; and built the Red Tower, as a marriage-gift for his daughter. The lovers built a church where their hut had stood, and when they died they were buried within its walls.

Such were the particulars which the Herr Von Cothen communicated to me. The next day I made some inquiries respecting the story, which seemed obscure in some parts; the old man stoutly and sternly denied having uttered a syllable on the subject, and appealed to *his* well-known taciturnity as evidence that *he* did not belong to the class of story-tellers—a set of persons for whom he had a most avowed and resolute contempt. He admitted, however, that I had picked up the popular legend in some way, but persisted in the denial that he had been the narrator. I was obliged to be content with this explanation, although it did not give me a very exalted opinion of the veracity of mine host.

Some months afterward, as I was looking at Titian's "Assumption of the Virgin" in the Dresden Gallery, I met with Augustus Saalfield, whom I had known at Gottingen. We spent the day together, and I told him, among other things, the mistake into which Von Cothen had fallen, respecting the narration of the above tale. Saalfield smiled, and dissipated my wonder by informing me that the worthy host of the Abode of Bliss, was a somnambulist, and the best story-teller within twenty leagues of Frankfort—in his sleep.

I learned, at the same time, that this legend took its origin from the fact that Selingenstadt witnessed the loves, and still preserves the remains of Eginhard and Emma, the secretary and daughter of Charlemagne. Tradition has made a sad mistake in the names of all the parties by taking Charlemagne for Nero, and the lovers for Ludolf and Clorinda. The Red Tower (now sadly dilapidated) was the residence of the lovers after Charlemagne saved the honour of his favourite daughter by giving her hand to his secretary. Eginhard built a church on the spot, and his bones and those of his beloved repose in a massy antique sarcophagus on an antique monument beneath its roof.

THE FINE ARTS.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN.

This institution has opened its annual exhibition of the works of living artists for the eleventh time, and we can with pleasure announce that it is, in point of merit, the best that institution has ever displayed. There is an improvement, generally, in every professor of the art; and the exhibition has more variety and more of originality of thought as well as manner, than any we have witnessed of the works of American painters.

Without farther remark, we will commence with number one of the catalogue, and in future numbers of the Mirror give our opinion of all the prominent pictures, of this truly brilliant collection, which does honour to the country, and proves the steady progress of this great accessory to the means of civilization.

No. 1.—Scene near Plymouth, Devon, England, by T. Thomson, A. This is a marine piece, painted with skill, especially the water and the vessels with their occupants. The shores do not give us a favourable idea of our father-land, but that *is* no fault of the painter, and we know that many charming spots may be found in that favoured country.

No. 2.—General view of Niagara Falls, from three miles below. For sale, G. Marsiglia, N. A. The painter has shown this wonder of the world as a distant object, and the eye passes deep chasms and a variety of the sports of nature, before arriving at the falls. The skill of Mr. Marsiglia is well known to the publick, and this is in the same careful style which previous landscapes have exhibited.

No. 3.—Landscape, W. M. Oddie, A. This is a highly-finished specimen in this delightful branch of the art, and proves that Mr. Oddie has lost no part of that enthusiasm which has produced, for several years past, some of the best pictures of this class that Clinton-hall could boast. The present painting is an improvement in detail, but not in colour, upon former works by this associate.

No. 4.—Packet ships Poland and Salem, sailing in company, by J. Pringle.

No. 5.—Portrait of the Hon. G. Tibbetts, Mayor of Troy, by A. B. Moore. This artist is for the first time made known to us, and we are pleased to see a picture which promises future excellence.

No. 6.—Falls in the Catskill Mountains, by G. Oakley, A. Those who remember the beautiful landscapes, exhibited by this associate last year, well know what to expect from his pencil, which is always powerful in colour and true to nature. This specimen is on a miniature scale, but in a vigorous style.

No. 7.—Landscape view of Catskill Mountains from the road, by G. Grunewald. For sale. A picture that will give additional value to any collection.

DEATH ON THE PALE HORSE.

There is one group in West's picture, now on exhibition at the great room of the American Academy in Barclay-street, which for pathos is not exceeded by anything pictorial of modern, or, perhaps, of ancient art—the family that appears to have been hurled from health, wealth and domestick happiness to distress, hopelessly struggling, and devoted to death by the approach of the pale horse and his remorseless rider. The mother's figure, as a European critick has observed, "is a creation of sentiment." She has sunk while making an effort to save the beautiful infant, which falls lifeless from the breast that nourished him. She is marked by the beauty of high breeding and maternal tenderness. The nursling (a beautiful boy) falls headlong from her embrace. His face is seen in front view, delicately foreshortened; his forehead downward; his light, golden hair waving with the agitation of his fall; the change of the carnation, to the pearly hue, mark the extinction of life as of the instant. The vivid tint of the cheek is gone, but his lips still retain a faint blush of carmine; his blue eyes are open, but the cloudy film of death is over them. The contour of both mother and child, by its flexibility, conveys the idea distinctly that life has yet scarcely departed. There is no appearance of pain or struggle: the approach alone of the terrible pale horse has put the vital spark to flight. These two beautiful, although lifeless figures, are finely contrasted by the remaining persons of the group. They are equally beautiful, and have all the attractions of health, life and action, with countenances and attitudes expressing the emotions of souls pure and affectionate. The girl stretches herself over the body of her mother, with an unavailing effort to save her from an evil which terrifies her, but is yet not understood in its extent. The husband supports his sinking wife, and at the same time turns to the enemy and endeavours to repulse that power, which, the next moment, will crush him and the lovely girl. We repeat, this is one of the most touchingly-pathetick groups that painting has ever produced.

THE NEW-YORK STAGE.

PARK THEATRE.

Miss Phillips, the first tragick actress of the English stage, played a short engagement at this theatre, on every night of which it was crowded. Little Hill played his Yankee characters three nights, to very full houses, and his benefit was a very flattering one. After performing at Boston and Philadelphia, he goes to London on a dramatick tour, and will visit the provincial theatres, to introduce the humours of the Yankee land to the astonished natives. It appears to us, however, that the actor of such parts in England will labour under much the same disadvantage which Reeve encountered here in his delineations of London low-life—a cast of character quite unknown to the audience, and seemingly a mere abstract personification of vulgarity rather than the impress, type, or shadow of anything tangible. This obstacle Reeve is now getting over, and the more that is seen of his acting, the more it is appreciated, as a correct, striking and vigorous representation of the manners, habits, speech, and action of the lower classes of the Babylon of modern times. This theatre is inundated nightly by the tide of country visitors with which the city is overwhelmed, and we understand that a series of most attractive entertainment is in preparation for the summer campaign.

BOWERY THEATRE.

The present engagement of Celeste, though as successful as usual, has produced no novelties; her old pieces continue as attractive as ever, and nightly draw very full houses, and that is no novelty to this theatre either. There is an *on dit* abroad, that Hamblin is about to relinquish the management of this theatre; we beg leave to doubt the truth of that report, which asserts any man as going to relinquish a clear rentroll of fifty thousand dollars per annum. The full current of its successful triumph is likely to be swelled to overflow by the long-looked for production of Rienzi—Miss Medina's Rienzi. As this is a lady's production, we must take it for granted that the *coquetterie* with which this piece has been announced, withdrawn, expected and delayed, is quite in character; however, next Monday will see the last of the Roman tribunes "bleed in sport."

ITALIAN OPERA, CHURCH-STREET.

This establishment has been taken by Mr. Flynn, late of the Bowery theatre, and under his well-tested management we have no doubt of its being a valuable addition to that recreation which Johnson terms the "gayety of nations." As musical taste in this city is not sufficiently developed for the support of an Italian opera, and as the predilection for tragedy, comedy, and farce is in the ascendant, we are glad that this beautiful structure is no longer to be left to cobwebs and dust, and that so well qualified a person as Flynn is to cater for the publick gratification. To do this fittingly, he proceeds to England, and from the different theatrical corps there he will select such performers, and provide himself with such new pieces, as will ensure a profitable and satisfactory result.

THE following lines are from the pen of our absent associate, and come sweetly recommended by their beauty and seasonableness. The month of the "leaf and the shadow," when the glory of the grass is greatest, and the beauty of the flower in its vernal freshness, when hearts expand with reviving nature, and everything assumes its freshest aspect, could not be better ushered in than by such a glowing strain as this.

MAY.

BY N. P. WILLIS.

Oh, the merry May has pleasant hours,
And dreamily they glide,
As if they floated, like the leaves,
Upon a silver tide.
The trees are full of crimson buds,
And the woods are full of birds,
And the waters flow to musick
Like a tune with pleasant words.

The verdure of the meadow-land
Is creeping to the hills,
The sweet, blue-bosom'd violets
Are blooming by the rills;
The lilack has a load of balm
For every wind that stirs,
And the larch stands green and beautiful
Amid the sombre firs.

There's perfume upon every wind—
Musick in every tree—
Dews for the moisture-loving flowers—
Sweets for the sucking bee;
The sick come forth for the healing breeze,
The young are gathering flowers;
And life is a tale of poetry,
That is told by golden hours.

If 'tis not true philosophy,
That the spirit when set free
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the tent of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of spring.

LITERARY NOTICES OF THE WEEK.

BOOK TABLE.

THE Harper's have published "The Self-Condemned," a romance, by the author of "Calthorpe," the "Lollards" etc., in a handsome volume, at the extremely moderate charge of fifty cents. This work relates to the distracted state of Ireland, at the close of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and its subject matter is intrigues in love and politicks—the descriptions of the former are frequently very highly coloured, but the author has contrived with singular felicity to steer clear of the forbidden ground. The following is a brief and rapid outline of the story, which will well repay perusal, and is a valuable addition to the Harpers' library of fiction. A British soldier is enamoured of the sister of an Irish chief, to whom he had been most hostile, but whose noble qualities win his admiration. Grace, placed by her brother for safety with Lord and Lady Roche, is perfidiously assailed by the nobleman, who ought to have been her protector; while the Nagle, jealous and impatient to the last degree of any improper advances made to his relation, becomes insensibly the unlawful admirer of Lady Roche, whom he had first approached as a thoughtless boy. The cold-blooded schemes of the heartless Lord Roche, are contrasted with the wild aspirings of the young chief, who wishes to believe that he only renders homage to virtue; and both lead through awful struggles to results which are intended to illustrate the prayer so appropriate to all our race—"Lead us not into temptation."

The second number of the "Naval Magazine" has appeared, and is altogether excellent. Stirring narrative, statisticks of navigation, details connected with the naval service of the country, maritime and general literature, are all blended together in rich profusion, and give the promise of the naval magazine becoming one of the most interesting periodicals in the country. We take much interest in its success, as it is in the highest degree creditable to the naval talent of this country, and we cordially recommend it to the attention of a judicious and discriminating publick. Its typographical execution is beautiful.

In glancing over the pages of a little volume of poems, entitled "A Glance at the Nations, with other poems" published by Russell, Odiorne and Co., at Boston, we read, where we opened the volume,

> "'Tis the quill of a goose I employ
> And wisdom, and wit are not mine—

as what we have seen of this *brochure*, induces us to agree with the estimation set by the author on his works, we will

> No further seek his follies to disclose,
> Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode.

The first number of the first volume of the third series of *Scientifick Tracts for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, was published on the first ultimo, by Messrs. Light and Stearns, of Boston. This number contains a popular treatise on the "Philosophy of Self-Education," by B. B. Thatcher.

The *Courrier des Etats Unis* one of the best and most amusing *recueils* of French literature, and the news of the day, has been acquired by Mr. Charles De Behr, the well-known foreign bookseller. The *Courrier* has strong claims already on the reading publick, which, from what we know of Mr. De Behr, will be strengthened and enhanced by his editorial control.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

We seldom have to do with errata *in the Mirror; but in number forty-three a communication headed "Mr. Gould's Essay," requires a single remark in that way. In W.'s specification number twelve, Mr. Gould is misquoted, the word as being erroneously introduced into the sentence taken from his lecture; and its introduction has the effect of transforming sense into nonsense. We do not know that W. added the word intentionally; but, if accidentally, it certainly is a queer mistake.*

THE NEW-YORK MIRROR.

SATURDAY, MAY 7, 1836.

Life Insurance.—Jack was one of our oldest subscribers. He took the Mirror thirteen years ago; commenced number one, volume one; paid regularly in advance; never complained; never "*stopped*;" never wrote saucy letters; never sent bad poetry, signed "an old subscriber," always read us; always praised us; congratulated us on our increasing circulation; and sometimes got us twenty subscribers at a dash.

We said, he never complained. We were wrong. There was one thing. He came into the office, one day—the handsome dog—his face shining with health and goodness, yet with an angry expression on his brow.

"What is the matter" said we.

"I have come to scold you."

"Scold?"

"Yes, scold—abuse—ridicule—in short, 'blow you up'"

"What about"

"The Mirror."

"What! impossible"

"Fact. You deserve a beating. You deserve a cutting up. You deserve——"

"Heavens! desist. What is our crime"

"Your Mirror is all very well—very well—white, fine paper—tastefully printed—pretty type—splendid engravings—valuable musick—charming cover—capital correspondents—glorious articles; but——"

"What"

"It has one fault—a radical, wretched, ruinous fault."

He really seemed in earnest, and we began to feel alarmed.

"Name it."

"*It is printed too cheap.* You can't afford it. You will sink. You can never rise above a certain point. Cheap literature—cheap medicine—cheap law! Adzooks! they are the very deuse! Your paper is *too cheap*"

Ah! Jack, thou wert a jewel on this homely earth.

Jack was like the Mirror. He was excellent, with one exception. He, too, had a single fault. He was handsome, clever, accomplished, noble-hearted, brave, true and affectionate; but—*he was poor*. His business, as the head-clerk in a large mercantile house, brought him about two thousand five hundred dollars a year. Of this, he was always sure, while life and health lasted. This seemed to satisfy him. His was no gloomy, feeble, despairing soul. He was full of courage—full of hope—full of sunshine. "Time enough, when the wind blows, to take in sail," he used to exclaim, when the champagne leaped, foaming, into the slender glass.

There was another thing which Jack had, rather peculiar—a trifle, to be sure—but one growing more and more rare every day—an insignificant, childish thing, as the world goes, and yet not without its beauty—a grace and a companion to the possessor—in short, *a heart*. This was one of Jack's singularities, an eccentricity, a drawback to his success in life; but, then—the poor fellow could not help it. He one day confessed, that he had striven against it, but "there was no use" Dear Jack! we regarded his frailty with sincere indulgence, and some amusement. It is so *very odd*, to see a man with a downright, fully-developed, warm, beating heart. In Wall-street, too! It was certainly ridiculous!

Among the follies which this silly thing led Jack into was getting married. There was a girl he had met—he introduced us to her—a tall, majestick, graceful, glowing *creature*, full of dignity, calm loveliness, and obvious truth. Her face was noble, placid and uncommonly beautiful—her manner tranquil, self-possessed and queen-like—her complexion fair and pure, her lips red and full, her eyes, to say the least of them, large and *very* blue. She was that most magnificent of all earthly objects, a splendid woman—full of tenderness—full of beauty—full of intellectual character—yet, withal, affectionate, gentle and trusting as a dove. What was very curious, she, too, had a heart; and they loved each other with passionate, ever-increasing ardour. They married, of course. Why should they not? For years they dwelt together, without quarrel—without unkindness. If there were a peevish word, it was borne meekly, silently and recalled completely. By the way, it may be observed, as some apology for a heart, that such things are often useful in a family.

"Jack," said we, to him, one day, as the ladies left the table, and a servant brought in more champagne, on a silver salver, "have you let up any money"

"No."

"Do you mean to"

"Never thought of it. Pass the bottle."

"You have a lovely wife."

"To be sure I have, and what business is that of yours"

"Jack, Jack, be serious."

"I can't."

"Then be silent."

"I will."

"You have a lovely wife"

"Isn't she? By heavens, I love her more every year."

"Has she any wealthy friends"

"No. If she had I should not have married her."

"But, suppose you should die"

"Die"

"Yes, she would be penniless. While you live she is secure of independence; but, in case of your death, what will become of her"

A tear glistened upon his lashes.

"Why, thou croaking raven ——" he began.

"Stop, Jack, hear me out. She can be secured an independence after your death."

"Ah!—a Life Insurance"

"Go down to the Life Insurance and Trust Company in Wall-street. Pay one hundred and thirty-six dollars yearly. Should you die within ten years, she will be secure of *ten thousand dollars*. Your wife will not be cast adrift without money."

"By heavens" he said, "that this never should have entered my head! I will go to-morrow. It is my *duty*."

"It is. And one which will make you happy in life, and which will sooth the dark apprehensions, respecting your wife's subsequent welfare, upon the bed of death, when no cares of an earthly nature should intrude upon the sacredness of holier themes."

The emphatick "pop" of another bottle, broke a short pause into which we had both fallen, and Jack, replenishing our glasses and re-lighting his cigar, which had lost its fire during our solemn conversation, we said no more upon the subject.

Six weeks after we met Jack full of life, health and hope.

"Is it done"

"What"

"The Life Insurance."

"Bah" said he, with his fingers on his forehead, "my stupid head. I have never thought of it since. To-morrow, positively, it shall be done. I will make it a point—the first thing *to-morrow*."

"To-morrow" It came. It was the loveliest of bewitching days. All nature was stirring with the beauties of an opening summer. Buds and blossoms covered the trees; verdant grass was bursting over the earth; a blue, ethereal, delicious sky bent over the city; the bay slept a vast sheet of mirror; packet-ships were setting forth through the Narrows; steamboats ploughing the silent floods; the voices of business and pleasure, of youth and loveliness were abroad everywhere upon the perfumed breeze. We walked down Broadway, happy in the sight of universal happiness. The first friend we met accosted us with:

"Have you heard the news"

"No. What"

"Jack B——"

"What of him"

"Dead"

"Impossible"

"Last night—a fit of apoplexy—perfectly well at supper-time—ate, drank, smoked, laughed, talked, went to bed—and at two in the morning—all over"

"And his lovely wife"

"Distracted! crushed! penniless! He was to have insured his life for ten thousand dollars the *next morning*"

Thoughts on Shad and Eating-houses.—The numbers of these delicious creatures—these shad—taken in our bay, would form a good topick for some calculator. There is quite a fishery, and the tender wanderers command prices in the market at different times from five dollars to a sixpence. New-York boarding-houses and eating-houses seem to have overlooked the old method of *broiling* them. Being one of those luxuries which put philosophy out of countenance, and make one an epicure whether he will or not, we have made several attempts among the eating establishments of the town, to enjoy this favourite relish. It has been served up always badly, greasy, fat, fried, repulsive and unhealthy. A word, too, *en passant*, on these eating-houses. Several of them which used to be tolerable, have scandalously fallen off. Some must have realized large fortunes, and yet they are such filthy receptacles that we could not but wonder to see—as we certainly did—*gentlemen* dining there. Black and unwiped knives and forks; stained and unseasable table-cloths; no napkins; raw potatoes; grease—and a general air of negligence and rudeness marked three of the most prominent. The waiters also are pert, saucy, disobliging, disrespectful and ignorant of their proper business. And we observed, in one instance, an act of downright insolence on the part of a proprietor for which he merited exposure, if not the more summary instruction of a horsewhip. Why do not some enterprising capitalists establish a few more eating-houses to keep pace with the general improvement of the city in other respects—with *clean* napkins, table-cloths, plates, knives and forks, with vegetables properly cooked, and with respectful, well-behaved and silent servants. If a man is too late for dinner at home, in a metropolis like this, there should be more than one *restaurant* at which he may hope for accommodation without the certainty of spoiling either his clothes or his temper. At present we suspect there is but one, and to avoid either particular offence, each clamorous, greasy, hot, unclean receptacle about town may, if it pleases, appropriate the restricted compliment to itself.

To return to our first topick—the shad—we were thinking, after all, what foolish things they must be to allow themselves, day after day, year after year, to be caught in this way. How long have those nets been set in our waters? These piscatory nations, at the genial touch of spring, enter in innumerable shoals from the sea, and every year their fatal course is interrupted by the nets which their hardy human enemies set in their way. By thousands and thousands they rush to their fate. They sweep, by generations—by nations, into the snare. They are drawn out in sight of those escaped by chance and destined to be caught the subsequent day, and from their liquid fields, their beating and rolling realms of crystal light and foam, they are abducted, reluctant, resisting, floundering, slipping, splashing, frightened, forced off, their companions know not where, and yet is there never a scarcity of other captives. Those not taken to-day, come on just as precipitately—just as blindly to-morrow. The silly things. Have they no eyes? Is it possible that even a *shad* can be so untroubled with the *shad*-ow of an idea one *annual* pun—we restrict ourself to *one a year*? is not to reflect sometimes, not to inquire where all these multitudes of his friends and relations go to—what is the reason they never return—they are never heard from, or heard of! Among all the myriads and myriads of those bright-looking and graceful fellows, is there never one thinker—one observer—one philanthropist—one reformer! Have they no conversation; no interchange of thought; of impressions; of fears and hopes! Do they go on trooping in measureless crowds through those sweet floods, without even so much as a "how do ye do," or "my respects t'ye" Ah, if they had one orator, one newspaper, one spark of reflection! Poor, simple things! How little do they reflect when they first dart leaping and flashing through their transparent and gorgeous realms of water, that their swift, sporting career only brings them nearer to a net—nearer to a gridiron. Ah, could they but be informed of it! Had they a language! Had we a knowledge of that language, verily we would almost, out of good nature, organize "A Society for the Instruction of Shad," we would teach them to read, to listen to discourses. We would educate shad ashore, and send them forth heralds of light, and pioneers of better times.

Thus far had we written in this article, when we turned a pitying look upon one of these fish, which a fisherman had left at our office, as a curiosity, for its size and beauty. It hung against the wall, suspended by a nail; and, in deploring the fate of its people, we looked at it compassionately. To our surprise, it turned slowly around, in such a way as to look us in the face; and, with a grave and somewhat dignified and declamatory manner, addressed to us the following words:

"I have read your article, sir, over your shoulder, with great attention, and made many reflections upon it. You wrong us greatly, in thinking us such fools. We have as much mental intercourse as you curious inhabitants of this thin air. I, sir, am a preacher. I have, for years, planted myself by those very nets you spoke of. I have prayed, shouted, begged, intreated, and threatened. Strown them like nets—laid up the corded snare—pointed out their struggling companions floundering in their prison, and dragged off by the captors—yet to no purpose. The heedless things would never listen—never believe—never be advised. On they go, no matter where. Ruin itself cannot make them pause."

"Astonishing obduracy!" we exclaimed.

"Not so fast, my friend," cried our companion. "You creatures of earth, who have legs instead of fins—who walk, not swim—are very much talked of by us for oddness, as blind in relation to your own affairs."

"Indeed!"

"Ay; you go to ruin, also, with your eyes wide open. You have newspapers, reformers, philanthropists, orators, and all that. But what good have they done? Do they prevent theft—intemperance—murder—treason—all sorts of wickedness—all kinds of folly? Go not you to your graves just as precipitately as we? What is intemperance, but a huge net? What are your diseases, produced by high living and late hours? What your battle-grounds—your law-suits—your speculations? Nets, my friend; all nets; and all mankind, at this instant, be floundering in them, like so many shad."

"But, if you, my dear sir, knew all this danger, and strove so hard to save your companions, how happens it that you did not save yourself? How came you to run into the net"

We cast a scrutinizing and rather severe glance upon the scaly satirist; but he had turned himself back upon his nail, and hung, lifelessly, by the cord that pierced his gills. His bright eye was glassy in death, his fins no more illustrated his periods with appropriate gestures, his tail was motionless, and altogether it was evident that he had determined to break off the conversation.

WHEN THE MERRY DANCE PREVAILS.

THE POETRY WRITTEN BY MR. FITZBALL—MUSICK COMPOSED BY M. W. BALFE.

LARGHETTO
One lit-tle kiss from lips I love, In the qui-et shade of our na - tive grove, Is dear-er far, more dear to
Dolce
me Than all this pomp I see, than all this pomp I see. When the mer-ry dance And twi- tells no no tales; When the mer-ry, mer-ry
ALLEGRETTO
mer-ry, pre-vails, light tales,
dance And twi- tells no tales. A lit-tle kiss, 'tis not a-miss, No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, 'tis not a-miss, 'tis not amiss; When the mer-ry, mer-ry
pre-vails, light
8va
Loco
8va
dance pre-vails, And twi- tells no tales, no tales, When the mer-ry, mer-ry pre-vails, And twi-light tells no tales.
light
dance
8va
8va
2d—Hath gilded splendour such rewards,
As the pleasure which humble love accords?
One lowly heart, one heart sincere,
Outvies each treasure here.
When the merry, merry dance prevails,
And twilight tells no tales, no tales, etc.

MISCELLANY.

AMPHITHEATRES.—Amphitheatres were vast erections in the Roman empire to amuse, or rather brutalize, the people, and qualify them for military life by the exhibition of murderous contests between gladiators and wild beasts. They were of an elliptical form, and adapted for thousands of spectators, to whom carnage was made a pastime. They were invented by Julius Cæsar and Curio. Augustus caused them to be erected everywhere. In the reign of Tiberius one fell at Fidenæ, by which fifty thousand persons were killed or wounded. Vespasian built the first of stone, the vast Coliseum for one hundred thousand spectators. Its longest diameter is six hundred and fifteen feet, and the other five hundred and ten, covering five acres and a half, and being one hundred and twenty feet high. It was imitated at Capua, Verona, Nismes, Autun, and Pola; while at Italica, Alba, Otriculi, Puzzuoli, Pæstum, Syracuse, Corinth, Arles, Carleon, and other places, smaller ones were constructed.

HEAT.—Count Romford, by boring a cannon within water, so heated it by the friction, that he made it boil, and actually boiled a piece of beef in it.

SALT OF THE SEA.—The sea, if desiccated, would afford a bed of salt five hundred feet thick, one hundred for every mile.

NOXIOUS WINDS.—The samiel is a hot, noxious wind, which sometimes passes over the sandy deserts of Arabia and Africa. It moves with the quickness of lightning, and passes in narrow currents, lasting only a few minutes. It occasions instant death to every man or beast who happens to face it, and it is said that it so decomposes them, that their limbs fall asunder. The coming of it is indicated by a thick haze in the horizon, and travellers, if they have time, throw themselves on their face with their feet toward it till it has passed.

FLOATING ISLAND.—This singular natural curiosity, the floating island, has emerged from the bottom of the Derwent-water three times in about thirty years. It contains about an acre, and is quite stationary, and is entirely unconnected with the bottom and the shore; the soil is three yards thick. This floating island is not a solitary example. There is one at Lake Garden, in Prussia, and another at Lake Kolk, in Osnabruck.

HURRICANES.—A West India hurricane has blown heavy cannon out of a battery and in exposed situations; walls of solid masonry with strong coping, not exceeding four feet in height, have also been destroyed.

AGE OF TREES.—An elm is full-grown in one hundred and fifty years, and it lives five or six hundred. Ash is full-grown at one hundred, and oak at two hundred.

MOUNT HECLA.—In 1783, threw up a current of burning lava, sixty miles long and fifteen broad. In Mexico, a plain was filled up by it into a mountain one thousand six hundred feet high, by an eruption in 1759. Its heat is so great that it continues to smoke for above twenty years afterwards; and a piece of wood took fire in lava three years and a half after it had been ejected, at a distance of five miles from the crater. Sometimes they throw up mud, and produce extensive devastations.

PROGRESS OF LITERATURE; AND QUERE, ENCOURAGEMENT TO OUR SMALL POETS?—We have been favoured with a copy of the rules of a book-society in a village five miles west of London; the eleventh rule runs thus:—"No professional books, works on divinity, politicks, or novels, to be admitted."

MOUNTAINS.—Most mountains present their precipitous faces to the sea, and their slopes to the land.

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